

"In the latter days, the sun shall rise from the west" • Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be on him)



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# The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community



Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908)



AHMADIYYA  
MUSLIM COMMUNITY

*United States of America*

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in 195 countries in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australasia, and Europe. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was established in 1889 by Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) (1835-1908) in Qadian, a small and remote village in the Punjabi province of India. He claimed to be the expected reformer of the latter days, the Awaited One of the world community of religions (The Mahdi and Messiah).

The Movement he started is an embodiment of the benevolent message of Islam – peace, universal brotherhood, and submission to the Will of God – in its pristine purity.

Hadrat Ahmad(as) proclaimed Islam as the religion of man: “The religion of the people of the right path” (98:6). The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. It firmly believes in and acts upon the Qur’anic teaching:

“There is no compulsion in religion” (2:257).

It strongly rejects violence and terrorism in any form and for any reason. After the passing of its founder, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been headed by his elected successors. The present Head of the Community, Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, was elected in 2003. His official title is Khalifat-ul-Masih V or Fifth Successor of the Promised Messiah.

[www.alislam.org](http://www.alislam.org)



Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad,  
Khalifat-ul-Masih V

# The Muslim Sunrise

[www.muslimsunrise.com](http://www.muslimsunrise.com)

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Muslims follow the name of God's prophets with the prayer *alaehis salaam* or 'may peace be upon him,' and for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *sallallahu alaehi wasallam* or 'may peace and blessings of God be upon him.' Companions of prophets and righteous personalities who have passed away are saluted by *radhi-Allahu anhu/a* or 'may Allah be pleased with him/her.' While such salutations sometimes are not set out in the text for readability, we encourage readers to offer these prayers as if set out in full.

Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (1872-1957) was the first Ahmadiyya Muslim missionary to arrive in America. In 1921, he founded the Muslim Sunrise, which stands today as the longest running Muslim publication in America. The magazine seeks to open discussions on Islam and topics relating to religion in general. It highlights the role of Islam in an ever changing global society. It provides a platform for public opinion on contemporary issues and presenting their solutions from an Islamic perspective.





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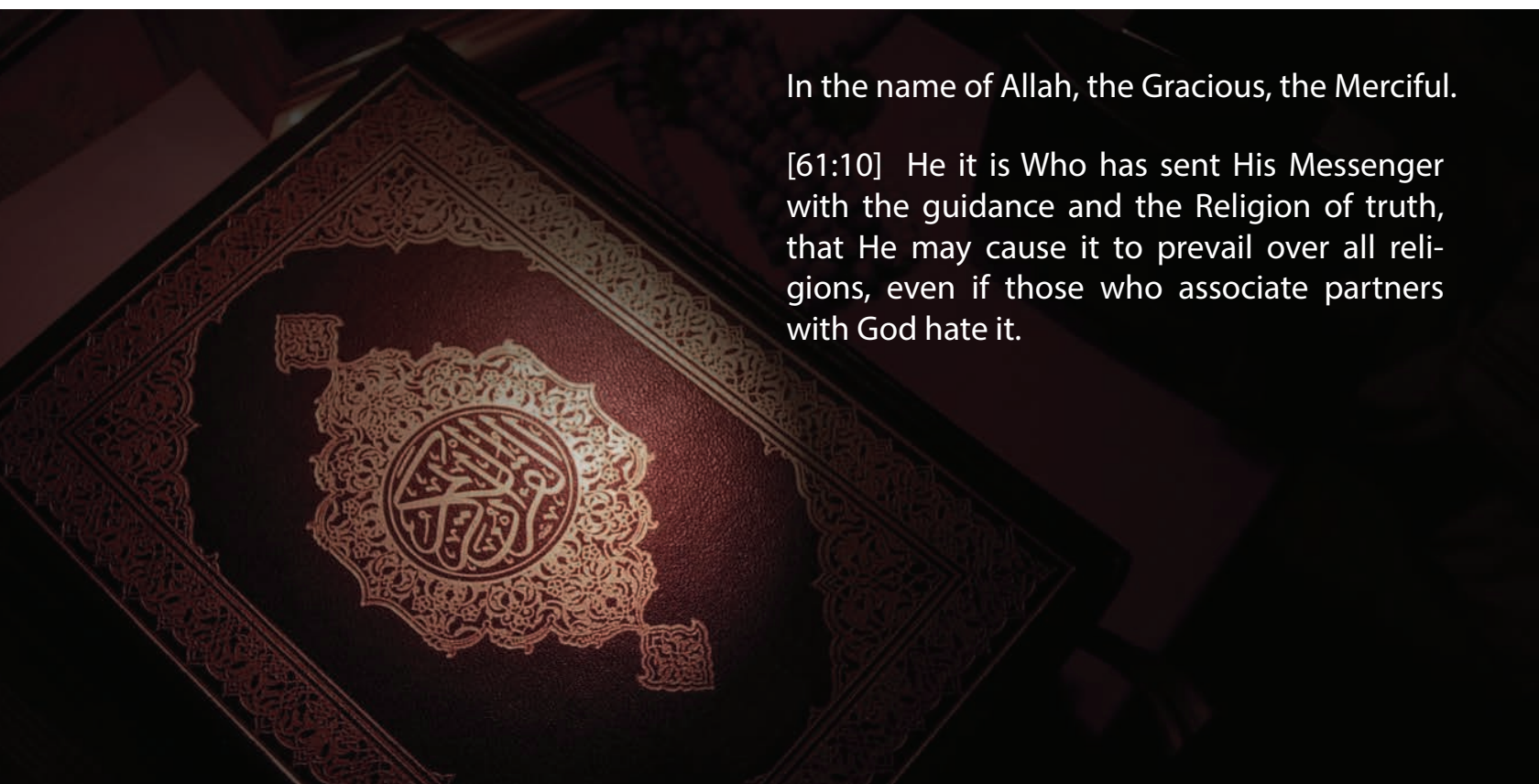
# FROM THE HOLY QUR'AN

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَى وَدِينِ  
الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ  
الْمُشْرِكُونَ ②

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

[61:10] He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God hate it.



# IN THE WORDS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH<sup>(as)</sup>

(Haqiqat-ul-Mahdi, Ruhani Khazain, vol. 14 pp 429-433)

My belief and the belief of the members of my community is that the bulk of the Ahadith concerning the advent of the Mahdi and the Promised Messiah are utterly untrustworthy. These fall into three categories:

1) The Ahadith which are false and fabricated. They are reported on the authority of people who were considered dishonest and given to falsehood. No sincere Muslim can place any trust in them.

2) The Ahadith which are considered weak and which are untrustworthy on account of mutual contradictions. They are either not mentioned by the great Imams of Hadith or have been mentioned as doubtful, and the truth and honesty of their narrators is not certified.

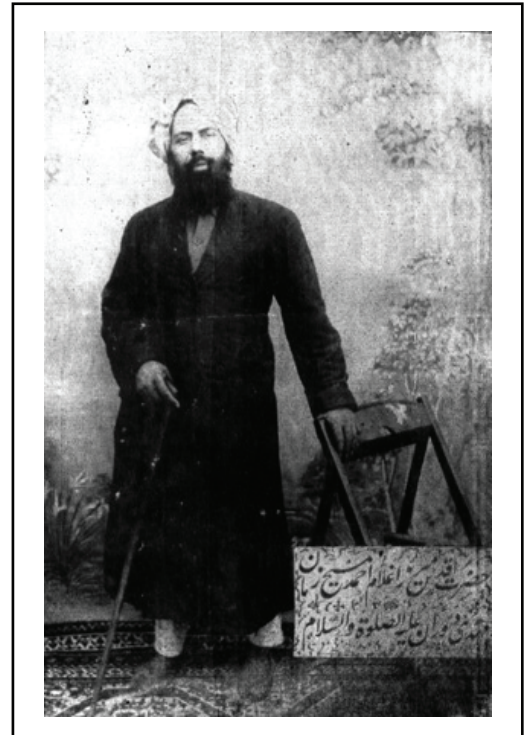
3) The Ahadith which are true, and are confirmed as such, but have either been already fulfilled or they make no reference to any physical warfare and only predict the coming of the Mahdi who will have no worldly kingdom or khilafat and will neither fight nor cause bloodshed. He will have no army but will establish faith in the hearts of the people through his spirituality and inner attention. For instance, there is the hadith:

لا مهدي الا عيسى

This is mentioned in the collection of Ibn-e-Majah, which is known by this very name, and is also comprised in Hakim's Mustadrak, on the authority of Anas bin Malik. This hadith has been narrated by Muhammad bin Khalid Jundi on the authority of Aban bin Saleh who related it on the authority of Hasan Basri who related it on the authority of Anas bin Malik who heard it from the Holy Prophet(sa). This hadith means that there will be no Mahdi except the person who will appear in the spirit of Jesus and whose teachings will be like those of Jesus, because he will not physically resist evil nor fight; he will spread the truth through his holy example and through heavenly signs, and will be both the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi. This hadith is supported by another hadith comprised in the collection of Sahih Bukhari, which says:

يضع الحرب

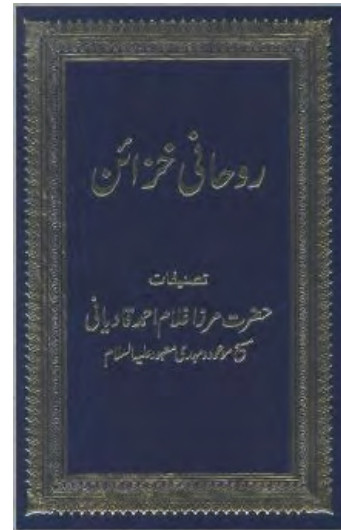
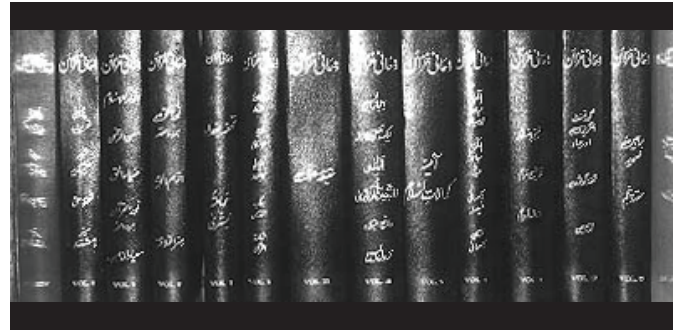
This means that the Mahdi, whose other name will be the Promised Messiah, will put an end to all religious wars and will direct that there should be no fighting in the cause of religion and that religion should be propagated through the light of the faith, moral miracles and the signs of nearness to God. I, therefore, affirm that he who fights in this age for the sake of religion, or lends support to any such fighter, or--openly or secretly--counsels fighting, or entertains any such designs, is guilty of disobedience to God and the Holy Prophet(sa) and transgresses the limits, obligations and admonitions which are prescribed by them.



...I am the Promised Messiah who is divinely guided, and who follows the morals of the Messiah(as). Everyone should judge me with reference to these morals and should purge his heart of all ill will concerning me. A careful consideration of the teaching that I have set forth during the last twenty years, from Barahin e-Ahmadiyya to Raz-e-Haqiqat, should testify to my inner purity. I can prove that I have spread these books as far as Arabia, Turkey, Syria and Kabul. I utterly repudiate the doctrine that Jesus will descend from heaven to fight the battles of Islam, or that anyone who calls himself Mahdi, and appears from among the descendants of Hadrat Fatima, will be the monarch of the time, and that the two of them will start a reign of bloodshed. God has revealed to me that all these speculations are false. Jesus(as) died long ago and lies buried in Mohalla Khanyar in Srinagar, Kashmir. Thus, as the descent of the Messiah from heaven is disproved, the appearance of any warrior Mahdi is also falsified. Let him who thirsts for truth accept this.

(Haqiqat-ul-Mahdi)

Ruhani Khazain, vol. 14 pp 429-433





# EDITION

## FALL 2014

The Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) foretold about the advent of a Mahdi in the fourteenth century according to the Hijri calendar. He also prophesied about the second advent of the Messiah in the same timeframe. The entire Muslim Ummah was eagerly expecting the arrival of the Messiah and Mahdi for fourteen hundred years. Most of the interpreters believed that there would be two individuals, one being the Mahdi and the other being Jesus(as) son of Mary(ra). Although there are some differences in the interpretation of these prophecies among Sunni and Shia Muslims, there has been complete agreement about the time of their coming.

In the beginning of the fourteenth century, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) claimed that he was the Mahdi appointed by God in fulfilment of the prophecies made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa). He also explained that Jesus(as) son of Mary(ra) would not be coming down from the clouds but rather, he himself, is the manifestation of Jesus to appear in the latter days. He explained that the appearance of Jesus was prophesied in the Christian terminology since there are prophecies about the second coming of Jesus. Prophecies mentioning the title of Mahdi, the Guided One, are according to the Muslim terminology.

The distinctive feature of the Mahdi is that he is to be guided by God Himself and would be the judge among Muslims to inform them of correct interpretations of the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith. One of the proofs of his direct guidance is through the abundance of revelations he received and prophesied about future events. It was through the advent of Hadrat Ahmad(as) as the Mahdi that the attacks of Christian missionaries throughout the world, and specifically in India, were defeated through reason and arguments.

Many Muslim scholars were expecting a warrior Mahdi who would start religious wars against the non-believers. They also believed that he would physically kill the swine and break the cross. Hadrat Ahmad(as), the Mahdi, explained and provided judgment and interpretation of these prophecies.

He openly announced that it is not the time of Holy Wars to be fought with swords and guns but it was time of the Jihad of the pen. The Mahdi was to defend Islam on all fronts through arguments and logic, and spread the true message of Islam throughout the world. The meaning of breaking the cross and killing the swine was the defeat of the Christian doctrines which would take place through the Mahdi, again through the use of the pen. This was not acceptable to the scholars of Islam and they refused to accept him.

It has been over 125 years since the advent of the Mahdi and his interpretations have proven true and irrefutable. Many Muslims today accept his interpretations without acknowledging him as the true Mahdi. Muslims have started to give up hope and don't care to discuss the coming of the Jesus(as) son of Mary(ra) from the skies. They have also started to profess the interpretation of jihad as explained by Hadrat Ahmad(as) as being the Jihad with the help of the Holy Qur'an and not with guns and bombs, especially since the attacks of September 11 in New York.

The Mahdi's appearance will manifest itself throughout the world in the years to come. The world will acknowledge him according to the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa). It is only a matter of time because it is decreed and so it shall be done.

In this issue we have presented many aspects of the prophecy about the coming of the Mahdi. Hopefully, it would give the readers some insight and inspiration to look into the claims of the Mahdi whom Allah has sent to be the guide for mankind under the teachings and example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa).







# Jumu'ah Sermon Synopsis

Delivered by Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad  
on August 15, 2014

Prophets of God are role models and in the aforementioned verse by mentioning God in conjunction with Prophets it has been made clear that they say and do whatever God states. Prophets of God should be followed blindly to attain spiritual life and of course it is stated about the Holy Prophet(saw) that it is essential to follow him in order to attain love of God, and true spiritual life can only be attained through love of God! The Holy Prophet(saw) made it very clear that the religious leaders of Islam will one day be the worst of creation, as indeed are the acts of Muslims today. And it was said that this will be the time when the Promised Messiah will descend. We observe that the Promised Messiah(as) claimed that he had brought life-giving water and those who accepted him attained the spiritual life that the water gave. Huzoor said recently he was interviewed by a BBC correspondent. The interview was quite long and they broadcasted parts of it in a documentary on BBC Asia yesterday. It will either be broadcast on Saturday or begin to be broadcast on BBC World Service Radio. They have included Huzoor's remark that the beautiful teaching of Islam as presented by the Jama'at is the true teaching of Islam and this is why hundreds of thousands of people are joining the Jama'at. It is a great favour of God on Muslims that He sent His Prophet in this age and revived its teaching so that we may continue to receive spiritual life. Those appointed by God come with the promise that they will take those who will follow them to success and they will be given spiritual life.

This indeed was also the promise made to the Promised Messiah(as); that he will triumph and his followers will continue to progress. The system of Khilafat will continue to do his task after him and anyone who will rise against it will be unsuccessful and will fail. It is also the way of the world that in order to attain any objective one has to work hard and sacrifice. Indeed, for higher objectives greater sacrifice is needed. Sacrifice for eternal spiritual life is continuous, however, at times God confers in amazing ways on those who are ever ready for sacrifices without any sacrifice. If man shows even a small measure of Divine attributes on human level, he can confer on others, whereas God gives without measure and even rewards good intention. Huzoor said in this post today he read about our boys distributing leaflets, either in Germany or some other European country. The leaflets were about the advent of the Messiah. At one place the boys met some men who told them that they had been discussing about the advent of the Messiah and wondered if he was come down from the heavens why had he not done so and if another Messiah was to come where and how he would arrive! It was during their discussion that Ahmadi boys gave them the leaflets and also an invitation to an exhibition

# The claim <sup>OF</sup> Hadrat Mirza Ghulam AHMAD(as) of Qadian

By Seher Mujeeb Chowdhry

He it is Who has raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom though before that they were in manifest error; And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise."

**Surah Al-Jumu'ah - Chapter 62, verses 3-4**

A companion of The Holy Prophet(sa) relates: One day we were sitting with The Holy Prophet(sa) when this chapter (Al-Jumu'ah) was revealed. I enquired from him: O Messenger of Allah! Who are the people to whom the words 'among others of them who have not yet joined them' refer? Salman ra, a Persian was sitting among us. The Holy Prophet(sa) put his hand on Salman(ra) and said: If faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it. (Bukhari).

This Hadith (Saying of the Prophet) was the very prophecy that spoke of the coming of the Messiah, a prophecy that was proven in the person of Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. The Prophet(sa) had also made it clear that at the time of the advent of the Mahdi-Messiah nothing would have been left of Islam but its name, and nothing would have been left of the Qur'an but its melodious recital of words.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, who was of Persian descent, claimed that he was the expected Mahdi-Messiah. Explaining the purpose of his mission, he said: 'When God Almighty, observing the condition of the world and finding the earth filled with every type of disobedience, sin and misguidance, appointed me for the propagation of the truth and the reform of the people, then I, in obedience to this divine command, sent forth the call through written and oral announcement that I was the person who was to arrive at the beginning of the century for revival of the Faith. My purpose was to re-establish the Faith which had disappeared from the earth and to pull mankind towards reform, righteousness and truthfulness through the power and strength that God had bestowed upon me, and through the magnetic power of His hand. It was also my purpose to correct their doctrinal errors and to reform their conduct.' (Tadhkaratush Shahadatain, p. 1)

The tapestry of mankind's evolution is like a display of day and night, subsequently following each other. In the centuries that preceded darkness and despair ruled like an everlasting storm. Mankind was at a low and needed to be saved. Then dawned the divine light that claimed back the souls of the lost. Peace is restored once again. However, ignorance tends to creep back into the hearts of man, and what was once a period of spiritual beauty, changes like the seasons to a dry, bare wasteland, where nothing grows, and nothing lives. The Promised Messiah(as) had used the analogy of the seasons to describe the progression of mankind. In his words: as there are changes of seasons in the physical world, so there are revolutions in the spiritual world. He explained that this time, our time, is once again the beginning of Spring. He wanted mankind to recover from the deadness of Autumn and be reborn once again - mankind needed to renew its covenant with God. However, this bond is not meant to be a temporary affair, it was to be everlasting. Man had fallen away from its relationship with its Creator, this the Promised Messiah(as) claimed he would restore. In his own words:

'The purpose for which God has appointed me is that I should remove the malaise that afflicts the relationship between God and His creatures, and should restore the relationship of love and sincerity between them. Through the proclamation of truth I should bring about peace by putting an end to religious wars and should manifest the verities which have become hidden from the eyes of the world. I am called upon to demonstrate that spirituality which has been overlaid by selfish darkness, it is for me to demonstrate in practice and not in words, the Divine attributes which penetrate into the hearts of people and are manifested through prayer and concentration. Most of all it is my purpose to plant once more in the hearts of people the pure and shining Unity of God which is free from every suspicion of paganism and which has completely disappeared. All this will be accomplished not through my power, but through the Power of Him Who is the God of heaven and earth.' (Lecture Lahore, p. 47).

The world is no stranger to religious wars, for there have been enough of them throughout history. Through unity of God, the Mahdi(as) will enable the unity of a divided mankind, and unite everyone under the banner of God.

The world has changed very much since prophets of long ago, but the patterns of man's progressions will continue, just as history has always witnessed. When Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) made his claim, it was not meant only for the East, nor was it supposed to be one that was a temporary cause to strive for the liberation from darkness. Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) wanted desperately for all of us to recognize the mercy of our Lord and Master.

In his book *Zuroorat-ul-Imam*, he wrote:

'When the Imam of the age appears in the world, a thousand lights accompany him, and there is joy in heaven, and the good qualities of people are stimulated through the spread of spirituality and illumination. He who possesses the capacity of receiving revelation begins to receive revelation; and he who has the capacity to reflect upon matters of faith experiences an increase of the power of reflection and understanding; and he whose heart is drawn towards worship begins to find pleasure in worship and religious exercises; and he who carries on discussions with the followers of other faiths is bestowed the power of reasoning and carrying conviction through relevant proofs. All this results from the spread of spirituality which descends from heaven with the Imam of the age and activates every eager heart' (Zuroorat-ul-Imam, p.4).

His claim was made so that we can claim our right for spiritual elevation. He planted the seed of light with this claim he made, in the hope that this time it will flourish stronger and brighter, and mankind will witness the fruits of that seed and will not be able to deny everything God had sent Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) for.





# Fulfillment OF THE SIGNS OF the coming of AL MAHDI

By, R Salim

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community differs from other Muslim sects with its claim that Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) is the Promised Messiah and Mahdi as foretold in the Holy Scriptures including the Holy Qur'an.

The purpose of the Mahdi was to come and prove the truth of Islam over all other religions. He was to do this by knocking down each false argument with a rational, truthful one. God Almighty, in order to conclusively verify the truth of Ahmad(as), laid out many clear signs to strengthen the claim of Ahmad(as) that he was the awaited Mahdi by people of all major religions.

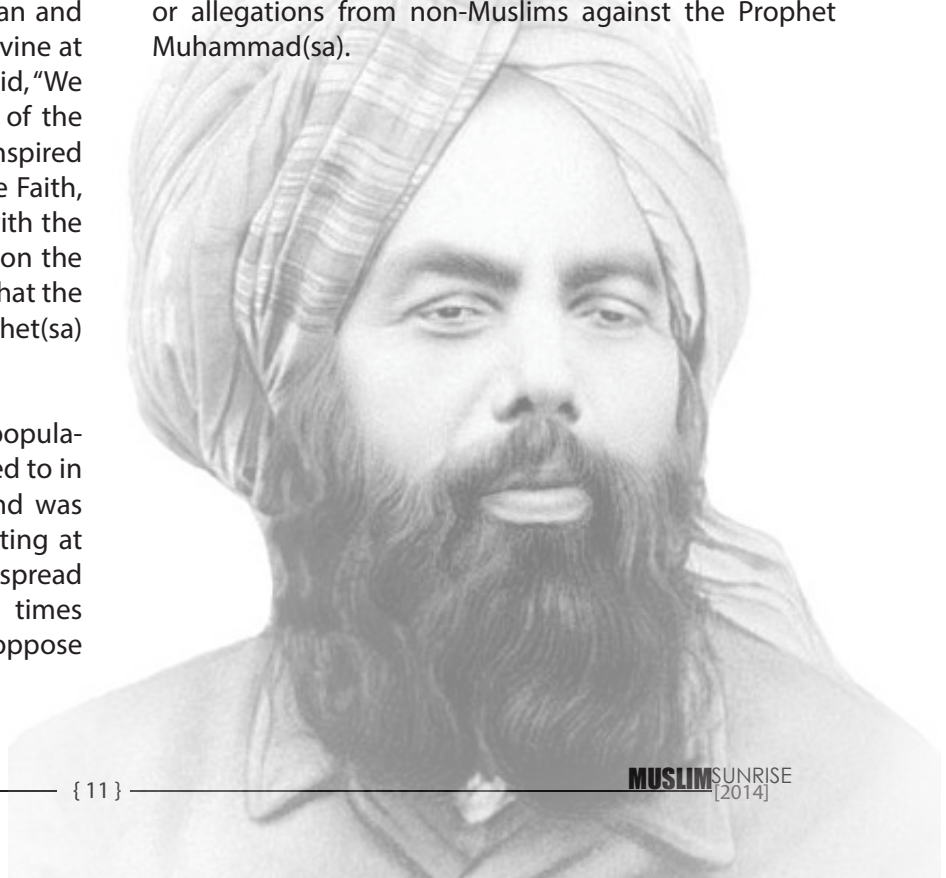
The chain of events following Ahmad's assertion, that he was indeed the awaited Mahdi were amazing. If the Mahdi was to show the one true faith then he was that Mahdi. One by one, each opponent of Ahmad(as) was defeated, by strong truths and following are some examples.

One clear sign, happened before Ahmad's claim, and this was his epic book, Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya. In it are 300 arguments in proof of the truth of the Holy Qur'an and the prophethood of Muhammad(sa). A Muslim divine at the time reviewed the book and enthusiastically said, "We had been most anxious over a long period that of the body of Muslim divines someone, who may be inspired by God to stand up in support and defense of the Faith, should write a book which should be in accord with the need of the times, and which should be set out, on the basis of reason and spiritual arguments, to prove that the Holy Qur'an is the Word of God and the Holy Prophet(sa) was a righteous Prophet of God."(1)

This typifies the opinion of the general Muslim population that Ahmad was a pious person, and as alluded to in this quote, one who enjoys nearness to God, and was thus inspired to complete a brilliant piece of writing at the hand of God. This support was to also begin to spread to other faiths, however, trials also began and times became hard and eventually Muslims began to oppose Ahmad(as).

In 1890 when Ahmad(as) declared that God had revealed Jesus(as) was not alive in heaven, outrage began and Muslims and Christians alike began to denounce the claims of their respected religious authority, Ahmad(as). This storm of outrage started after he claimed to be Mahdi. God Almighty fulfilled the signs of the Mahdi despite lack of public support for him.

The result of the denunciation of Ahmad(as) is that many opportunities were given to Ahmad(as) to show the clear truths God was revealing and there were no dirty spots on his piety throughout these events. This fulfilled the sign that he would come in the spirit of Jesus(as) and practice humility, gentleness and forgiveness during his prophethood. In the first public debate organized between Ahmad(as) and his former school friend Muhammad Hussain, after much enmity from angry mobs, the District Magistrate actually ordered him and the Muslims in the mobs, the enemies of the Promised Messiah(as) to leave town. Many debates followed, some organized by the enemies but many were the Promised Messiah's response to allegations against him or allegations from non-Muslims against the Prophet Muhammad(sa).



The Christian missionaries in India caused no tension in the Muslim community as they preached the love of God, until they too started talking about Islam and saying how mistaken it was.

One of the Mahdi's objectives was to break the Cross with clear arguments and this was also fulfilled. One of the primary incidents was with a Christian missionary Rev. Dr. Henry Martyn Clark, who decided the way to propagate Christianity was by holding a public debate, in which villagers with limited Islamic knowledge could look foolish against him. Conversely, the village elders wanted Ahmad(as), the most learned, for the debate, and Rev. Clark did not want to debate him. So he began to detract his issue of debate, highlighting his hesitation, which to Ahmad(as) was another support from God. The debate occurred with Abdullah Athim and the Christians wanted Ahmad(as) to show fresh signs from Allah. The Christians orchestrated a trick, bringing in three men; a blind, lame and dumb man. Ahmad(as) immediately turned the question back on them, arguing Christian scriptures spoke of this and if they were true, they should heal the three men, after which, they quickly ushered the men out of the room. Newspapers reported how the Christian replies had been inadequate. Furthermore, Ahmad(as) received revelation that the person in the debate following falsehood would be thrown into hell within 15 months, on which Athim declared fearfully "I repent, I repent. I did not mean to be disrespectful."(2)

In his writings the Promised Messiah(as) said about the belief of Jesus(as) alive on the heavens;

**"Remember very well that no one shall ever come down from heaven. All our opponents who live today shall die and none from them shall ever see Jesus son of Mary coming down from heaven; ...then their third generation shall also die...Then God shall cause great consternation in their minds and they shall then say that the period of the dominance of the cross has also passed away and the way of life has changed completely, yet the son of Mary has not come down. Then in dismay the wise among them shall forsake this belief and three centuries from now shall not have passed when those who await the coming of Jesus son of Mary, whether they be Muslims or Christians, shall relinquish altogether this conception. Then shall prevail only one religion over the whole world and there shall be only one religious Leader." (3)**



Dr Henry Martyn Clark (1857-1916)

"Abide by the truth and hold fast to it. He sees what is in your hearts. Can man ever deceive Him? Can trickery be of any avail against Him?" (4) Here is another quote from the Promised Messiah's writings, he writes of the characteristics of deceiving people just like the ones shown in the enemies of Ahmad(as). More signs were yet to come in the life of Ahmad(as) related to the characters of Muhammad Hussain and Dr. Clark. In fact, both men were part of a complex plot to ruin Ahmad(as) but it was not in God's plan for this to happen.

The Muslims and Hindus wanted to bring Ahmad(as) down, and Dr. Clark was also unhappy with his first encounter with Ahmad(as). Dr. Clark claimed to the authorities Ahmad(as) conspired to murder him and produced a boy who falsely swore he had been ordered by Ahmad(as) to kill Dr. Clark. He then coached that witness in the protection of his missionaries of what to say in the trial. Muhammad Hussain was one of the prosecution witnesses and the Hindu Lawyer Mr. Dutt was legal advisor. In this way, all of the faiths had a role in the scheme. However, with the intervening hand of God, the case grew increasingly ridiculous and Ahmad(as) was cleared of all accusations. He told his companions one morning a revelation from God:

"This is a threat from the authorities but you will be discharged". (5) He said he had seen lightning coming to his house from the West and as it got nearer it changed into a star. This is ironic because one of the signs of the Mahdi was he would spread his teachings to the West.

The advent of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi also brought many worldly signs that went with the claim. He prophesied many significant events like the First World War when he spoke of trees and wildlife decimated and this really resembled the War. He also specifically talked about the fall of the Persian Empire: "The Palace of the Persian Empire has been shaken" (6) and the Emperor was dead in less than a year.

The fulfillment of the signs of the Mahdi included his breaking of the Cross with arguments. For example, he had a lot of opportunities to present and show the validity of the truths he was showing to everyone. For example, another opportunity given to him was a religious conference and for this God helped him write a manuscript, that later Leo Tolstoy commented on, "The ideas are very profound and very true", (7) among others. This was The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam that was written to show the verities of the Holy Quran. Ahmadis believe and practice to this day that this was not the physical breaking of the cross but through reasoned arguments and those truths live on today in his recorded books.

Ahmadis also believe in the parallels drawn between Ahmad(as) and Jesusas and that the wait for the Messiah and Mahdi ended with his coming in the person of Ahmad(as). The other signs were the conditions in the world at the time of his claim and really over the almost 20 years after his claim he revealed many things from God which later fulfilled entirely. May God guide us to understand the truths of and signs of God, and continue to lead us to the path of peace. Amen

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# SPIRITUAL TREASURES

## BOOKS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH(as)

### Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya (Parts I & II)

Reviewed by Naveed Ahmed Malik

**Editor's note:** The holy founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) of Qadian, wrote more than 90 books in his lifetime. This new department, "Books of the Promised Messiah," will introduce readers to the books of the Promised Messiah(as), beginning with the 30 or so that have been translated into English. We will review one or two in each forthcoming issue, insh-Allah. All of these books are available at [alislam.org/books](http://alislam.org/books).

#### Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya (Parts I & II)

Arguments in Support of the Divine Origin of the Holy Qur'an and the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa)

**Year Written:** 1879

**Year Published:** 1880

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#### Introduction

The Promised Messiah(as) began a lifelong campaign of defending and promoting Islam in the early 1870s. Greatly troubled by the aggressive and underhanded attacks on Islam, in 1872 the Promised Messiah(as) published an article in the Bangalore paper, *Manshur-i-Muhammadi*. In it, he highlighted the teachings of the Holy Qur'an on the virtue of truthfulness, calling upon representatives of other religions to produce one-third or even one-fourth as many teachings from their own scriptures. No one took up the challenge.

Hadrat Ahmad(as) continued to write and engage in debate—but more was needed. Priests and pundits were leveling new, vicious attacks against Islam, and philosophers were leading a growing tide away from God and towards atheism. Misguided Muslims compounded the problem through their denial of key aspects of Islam, such as the efficacy of prayer, continuity of revelation, and prophethood itself.

Against this backdrop, towards the end of the 1870s, Hadrat Ahmad(as) began writing a book—his first. He entitled it *al-Barahin-ul-Ahmadiyya 'ala Haqqiyyati Kitabillah-il-Qur'anwan-Nubuwwat-il-Muhammadiyyah* (translated above).

The author originally intended to split the book into 50 parts, but ultimately settled on five, which nonetheless spanned more than 1,100 pages. Its first two parts were relatively brief, providing context for the need of such a book, and an introduction to its content. The principal difficulty the author had in publishing the book was financial, and so, as was custom, he appealed to the Muslims of India to help finance this endeavor in support of Islam. The author was disappointed, though unsurprised, by the mostly lackadaisical response. Still, about 35 people donated more than 450 Rupees—one of whom was responsible for more than 70% of this figure.

In 1880, the author published Parts I & II of *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*. (The English translation of these parts was published in 2012.) The scholars, journalists, and critics who had received Parts I through IV in advance took the occasion to write superlative reviews of the work. (Note: the author wrote Part V in 1905, which was published in 1908.)

Hadrat Ahmad(as) would go on to write more than 90 books—some literary miracles in Arabic, others groundbreaking works on topics like revelation—but Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya would forever stand as his magnum opus. The 45-year-old author was hailed as a reformer and champion of Islam, and Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya turned back the intellectual tide in favor of Islam in the Indian subcontinent

## Summary

Part I begins with an announcement concerning the discounted price of Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, set well below the actual cost of 25 rupees per copy. The author set this price in an effort to make the book available to all classes of Muslims, but in doing so, dug a financial hole that needed filling. He listed everyone who contributed to the book, even if only 2 annas (the equivalent of less than \$0.01 cent), and mentioned 11 “esteemed buyers,” who he called upon to help defray the remaining cost of publication.

Proceeding to discuss the need for the book, the author writes, “False beliefs and corrupt ideas find expression in different forms at different times. To refute them, God, by His grace, causes books to be written that vigorously counter such criticisms in the light of His Word, reduce the critics to silence, and completely incriminate them by means of irrefutable arguments.”

Where other books had failed, this one would succeed. The author writes that this book “proves the divine origin of Islam and the superiority of the teachings of Islam over all faiths and establishes the authenticity of the Holy Qur’an through a comprehensive enquiry.” By comprehensive, the author meant that while other books had addressed only a particular criticism or audience, this book would address all critics and criticisms of Islam through a compendium of arguments. Doing so would prevent Muslims from becoming materialistic, atheists, or apostates (as many had started to become in the 19th century).

Illustrating the author’s imposing linguistic skills, a tribute and prayer to God in classical Arabic is followed by a poem in Farsi (Persian), returning ultimately to Urdu, which is the principal language in which the book is written.

The author closes Part I by challenging anyone to prove that their own scriptures are equal to the Holy Qur’an vis-à-vis the arguments he presents in Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya; and failing that, at the very least refute his arguments. He even establishes an award of 10,000 rupees—the total value of his ancestral estate, and a vast sum—to anyone who can meet the challenge.

Part II begins with discussion of the hasty response of some Christians and Hindus, who, without having read the main text (in Parts II and III), vowed to respond to the book, using foul and disrespectful language in their announcements. The author called for patience until all parts of the book were published. He then appealed for more ardent support to publish the remaining (and main) parts of the book, juxtaposing the apathy of the Muslims with the zeal of the Christians, whose exploits in India had come at the expense of the religions native to the subcontinent.

The author then sets out the Preface to the book, explaining the prevailing conditions, and the need for such a book. This section serves as the substantive introduction to Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, and contains numerous lengthy footnotes (a recurring theme that is even more pronounced in Part III), which set out important contextual points in detail. In the course of introducing the book, the author lists six distinct advantages of Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya:

- First**, it comprises all of the “essentials of the faith of Islam,” so that one who has read this book will never again to be able to be deceived by those who seek to mischaracterize the religion;
- Second**, the book contains 300 strong arguments in support of the truth and principles of Islam;
- Third**, the book responds effectively to all the doubts and misgivings caused by critics from various religious backgrounds, “be they Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Aryah Samajists, Brahmu Samajists, idol worshippers, atheists naturalists, freethinkers, or agnostics;”
- Fourth**, the principles of other religions are scrutinized against the backdrop of Islamic teachings, thus illuminating the brilliance of Islam;
- Fifth**, anyone who reads the book will become cognizant of the truths and subtleties of the Holy Qur’an; and
- Sixth**, the book argues its points in a “very solid, reasoned and balanced fashion, but without compromising the requirements of grace and lucidity.”

It bears mentioning that the author wrote this book with “great civility,” which is in marked contrast to the foul language employed by notable authors of the time. But Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya nonetheless served as a forceful notice, accompanied by a bold challenge, that Islam now had a voice. Parts I & II raised the hopes of many a downtrodden Muslim—commoner and scholar alike. Parts III and IV would not disappoint. Their translation is in process. Parts I & II are available at [alislam.org/books](http://alislam.org/books).

# BOOKS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH

Reviewed by Shazia Sohail

FATH-E-ISLAM (Victory of Islam)

By Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1835-1908)

Year Written: 1890

Year Published: 1891

Number of Pages: 48

Serial Number: Roohani Khazain Vol. 3, Book no. 1

By Shazia Sohail

## Summary

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote the essay Victory of Islam in 1890. In the book, he paints the sorry state of faith which he says is afflicted by corruption and error, leading to spiritual blindness. Good deeds have been reduced to superficial activities. Youth are bidding farewell to faith altogether. Additionally, dishonesty and indecent behavior are rampant. The Christian Church is employing a variety of techniques to destroy Islam and the reputation of the Holy Prophet(sa) and no expense or effort is being spared in this endeavor.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad believes that only the miraculous Hand of God can counter these attacks and God has done so by bestowing divine favors of revelation, knowledge, insight and transcendent signs on the author to bolster the Islamic creed, in accordance with the prophesy made by the Holy Prophet(sa).

The author then points to numerous similarities between the paucity of faith in the people at the time of Jesus(as) and present times. The prophesy of the Holy Prophet(sa) that "Even if faith were to ascend to the Pleiades, this Persian will bring it down to earth" has categorically been fulfilled now in the person of the author. "The Messiah that was to come has come. Accept him if you will." "I have been sent to break the Cross and slay the swine. I descended from the heavens accompanied by angels who are on my right and on my left." "Even if I remain silent or my pen refrains from writing, those angels who have descended in my company will not stop the task assigned to them."

"These Angels enter human hearts that are willing and ready." These angels work unobtrusively and hearts inclined to goodness search for truth; they infuse the Vicegerent of God with magnetism that draws suitable hearts to him. The first sign of his appearance is the extraordinary fervor in the hearts of men for him. The second sign is unmatched spiritual proofs which cannot be challenged. The third sign is that the Holy Prophet(sa) spoke about him.

The backlash of deadly hatred is expected but, just as in the case of Jesus(as), God sent him to a people who are being ruled by a foreign government not consumed by hatred. Derision by disbelievers is nothing new. Jesus(as) was not only persecuted but was also put on the Cross by his people but God kept his mission alive. Similarly God will keep the author's mission alive as well, as per the revelation: "A warner came into the world but the world accepted him not. But God will accept him and establish his truth by mighty assaults." These assaults will be carried out by spiritual weapons provided by God and will come in the form of five branches:

- (i) Preparation of books
- (ii) Publication of leaflets
- (iii) Visitors
- (iv) Correspondence
- (v) Bai'at

God Himself has deemed all five of these branches to be important and essential. The scale of the work, and the financial sacrifice required to perform it, is huge indeed. Furthermore, in order to ensure speedy delivery of books to all those in need of it far and wide these books would have to be disseminated free of charge. No affluent Muslim has offered to shoulder the financial responsibility for these tasks. The author's personal means have been stretched to its limits by some 60,000 visitors in the past seven years, publication and circulation of 20,000 leaflets, and their postage to 12,000 leaders of hostile groups. People in Europe and America received this literature as well. Even correspondence costs money. So a general invitation is issued to Muslims to come forward and help with publication and set up a printing press.



A passionate plea is made to Muslims to demonstrate the same faith as the early Muslims and bear the financial burden of spreading the beauties of Islam. Lump sum and monthly payments are required so the work continues. No specific amount is prescribed so people may give of their own free will. Those who have certainty of faith will heed this call and reap the fruit, which is Allah Himself. In gratitude to Allah, the example of Maulvi Nur-ud-Din sahib is cited who offered to sacrifice everything for the sake of the author's mission, but the entire burden needs to be borne by a large group, not just by one person. Acts of sacrifice now constitute righteous actions. Sheikh Muhammad Husain of Muradabad, Hakim Fazl Din of Bhera and Mirza Azim Beg were deeply sincere friends as well.

The author then admits that not all those who have pledged allegiance to him are sincere. Then there are those rich men who say they are willing to spend provided a true man of God comes. These are invited to spend some time in Qadian and observe signs of Allah. Those who advocate for founding associations and opening schools to promote the interests of faith have been chided that these are not immediate remedies and warned them to consult their conscience lest they stumble. The book ends with a powerful admonition to apply wisdom to contemplating matters of the hereafter, and not just to worldly concerns.

### Reflection

Although written in 1890 the theme of this treatise is amazingly current. When the Promised Messiah(as) speaks of the various kinds of attacks being perpetrated on Islam and the Holy Prophet(sa) it appears as if he is addressing the twenty first century audience:

"Christians are out to destroy Islam and ready to use lies and fabrications in ways most subtle, and on all occasions and with the help of ever new techniques - all directed to beguile and lead people astray. Christians are defaming and lampooning the Holy Prophet(sa), the perfect man who proved himself the pride of holy men of all times and chief among the saints and apostles of the world. They hesitate not to caricature him in theatrical shows. They try and project a most hateful image they can invent of him. The worst that vicious and unchaste minds can think of is leveled against Islam and the Holy Prophet(sa) of Islam to lower them in the eyes of the world."

More than a third of the book is devoted to the appeal for financial sacrifice in exceedingly motivating and powerful words:

"To be indolent, to be indifferent, to be distrustful does not help a religious cause. Distrust destroys the peace of households and divides the hearts. Remember what the contemporaries of prophets in the past have done for their faiths. What sacrifices, what privations they accepted and underwent? Rich and poor alike took part. If a rich man parted with his belongings, equally did a beggar with his begging bowl, and all for the faith. They went on doing this until came the moment of victory. To become a true Muslim, a true believer, is not easy. Therefore, O men! If you really love Truth as good believers always do, then do not treat this Invitation of mine with scant attention."



# HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF MAHDI IN ISLAM

By Mubasher Ahmad, M.A., LL.B

The Arabic term 'Mahdi' (guided one) is derived from the root word 'Hada' (to guide, direct, lead, show the way, usher). The Holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad(sa) over a period of 22 years (A.D. 610 - A.D. 632). From the very start, it claimed to be a book of guidance: "This is a perfect book; there is no doubt in it; it is guidance for the righteous" (2:3). "Say, 'Surely, Allah's guidance alone is the true guidance'" (2:121). "And, surely, Allah guides those who believe in the right path" (22:55). In the Holy Qur'an the term 'Hadi' (guide) is used for God Himself: "...and sufficient is your Lord as a Guide and a Helper" (25:32). The same term 'Hadi' (Guide) is also used for the Prophets of God: "And there is Guide for every people" (13:8). However, neither the word 'Mahdi' (guided one), nor the term 'Al-Mahdi' (The Guided One) is used in the entire Holy Qur'an. These titles are found only in the Hadith literature – the Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad(sa) – collected and written down more than a century after his death.

There are more than 50 Sayings that refer to the coming of a Mahdi in future—before the Day of Resurrection. These Sayings also include coming of 'Isa(as) bin Maryam and the Dajjal (Antichrist). It is not clear what was the concept of Mahdi among the Companions of the Prophet(sa). However, as all the Sayings about Mahdi and related matters are narrated by famous Companions, such as Abu Huraira(ra), Hadrat Ayesha(ra), Hadrat Umme Salma(ra), Hadrat Abu Ayub al-Ansari(ra), Hadrat Ali ibn Abi Talib(ra), and Hadrat Abdullah ibn Mas'ud(ra), it goes without saying that in the lifetime of the Prophet(sa) and soon after his demise, his Companions had a fair idea who would be the Mahdi, under what circumstances he would appear, and what will be his assigned tasks. It is narrated that at times the Companions of the Prophet suspected a person to be the Dajjal who appeared to resemble his physical description given by the Prophet(sa). As all the Companions had full faith in the Day of Resurrection, therefore, they did believe in the coming Mahdi in future, for the Prophet(sa) had said, "Even if one day is left for the life on the earth, Allah will lengthen that day to send a person of my House whose name will be like my name, and whose nickname will be similar to mine. He will fill the world with justice and equity just as it was previously full of injustice and oppression" (Abu Daud, Ibn Majah).

This means that the Companions conceived that the Mahdi will definitely appear after an iniquitous era in Islam's history to restore high Islamic morals and social values.

Reading some of the Sayings, most of the Muslims think as if the Mahdi and 'Isa(as) bin Maryam are two different individuals. But all of the Companions unanimously had agreed upon the fact that no ancient Prophet, including 'Isa(as) bin Maryam was alive. At the demise of the Prophet(sa), Hadrat Abu Bakr Sadeeq(ra) had unambiguously made this point by quoting the Qur'an. Furthermore, some authentic Sayings make it clear that the Mahdi and 'Isa bin Maryam would be one and the same person. One of the Sayings, written in the Hadith book of Ibn Majah goes as follows: "Ans bin Malik(ra) narrates that the Messenger of Allah said, 'The circumstances will become extremely onerous; the world will continue to degenerate in morality; people's avarice and greed will increase tremendously, and evil people will be in the Fire. (For that time) there is no Mahdi other than Jesus ('La Mahdi illa 'Isa). Therefore, the second coming of Jesus as the Mahdi must have been understood by the Companions as metaphorical and not actual; it was understood to be the coming of a reformer who would restore the glory of Islam after it suffered a steep decline over the centuries.

In several Sayings of the Prophet(sa) it is mentioned that the Mahdi would be from among the Prophet's family, from his progeny (Ahl al-Bayt). For example, one hadith says, "The world will not come to an end until a man from my family, who will be called al-Mahdi, emerges to rule upon my community." Therefore, from the very beginning the Muslims, particularly of the Shi'ah branch, have expected the Mahdi to be through the lineage of Hadrat Ali(ra) and his wife Fatima(ra) who was a daughter of the Prophet. However, the Shi'ah concept of an Imam is different from that of a Sunni Khalifah. They believe that all the Imams are not only divinely chosen, but are also infallible, protected by Allah from making an error or committing any sin. The Imam is a superhuman being, above regular spirituality and closely connected with God. In addition, the Imam would have the deep understanding of the Qur'an, and he would display his knowledge of both the inner and outer meanings of the Qur'an by virtue of the 'Muhammadan Light' (Nur-e-Muhammadi).

In the Hadith literature different Signs of the time are detailed so that Muslims may recognize the Mahdi when he appears and follow him wholeheartedly. But nowhere is it mentioned that the Mahdi will disappear and remain in hiding for centuries before re-appearing to perform his assigned tasks. Obviously, the concept of the Hidden Imam came later among the Shi'ah branch of Muslims. Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Ali, also known as Muhammad al-Mahdi, the twelfth Imam of Twelver Shi'ahs, was born in CE 869. It is said that when he was only five years old, his father, Hasan al-Askari passed away, and he inherited the Imamate at that young age. At the same time, in CE 874, due to political risk of being killed by the ruling party of Abbasid caliphate, he was kept into hiding. It is claimed that he was hid in a cave under a mosque. This hiding of Imam al-Mahdi is known the Minor Occultation. During this time it is said that he communicated with his followers through his representatives. But later on, in CE 941, he went in the Major Occultation; he is still alive, and shall come back in the Latter Days to rule the earth. Before his return, the earth shall be in chaos, fully corrupted, and tyranny and oppression shall rule. He is still the spiritual leader, but without any communication, direct or indirect, with the people.

It is interesting to note that the concept of the Hidden Imam Mahdi is shared by some other branches of Shi'ahs as well; but the person is different in every case. The Seveners believe that their seventh Imam, Muhammad ibn Ismail, went into Occultation; the Taiyabbi branch of Shi'ah Mustaali sect says that their twenty-first Imam by the name of Taiyab abi al-Qasim went into hiding; and the Druze believe that in CE 1021 their Imam Al-Hakim bi-Amr, who was God incarnate, also went in Occultation. The reason for such a belief is the doctrine enforced by Imam Jafar that the world shall never be without an Imam; there has to be an Imam all the time – if not physically visible then hidden from the world.

With the passage of time, the concept of the Hidden Imam gained extraordinary addendums, mostly tragic. He was considered the main source of guidance and light for humanity which is now extinguished; and humanity is in complete darkness without him. On his return, he would lead a great army of the righteous and fight the final battle against the forces of evil. After crushing all the immoral forces of corruption, he would establish a perfect rule of law, bringing peace, justice and spirituality on earth. But sadly, it would last only for a few years, some say only for 7 or 9 years, and then the Doomsday will come to pass; the life on the earth will be completely destroyed by God.

The concept of Mahdi among Sunni Muslims is similar as far the purpose of his coming is concerned, that is, establishing peace, justice and morality.

They believe he will be a Caliph, natural resources such as rain will be in his favor, he shall distribute wealth, and the worldly possessions of Muslims will abundantly increase. Nevertheless, he will be a militant Mahdi; wage a great war against Christianity and Antichrist (Dajjal), and lastly against the Jews; and he will kill them all with the help of Jesus, who will descend from the heaven for this purpose.

Some claimants of the Mahdi, therefore, were rebellious men of arms. After half a century of passing away of the Prophet(sa) the clan of Ummayya took over the sovereignty, and in CE 686 Al-Mukhtar revolted against their kingdom, declaring that a grandson of Hadrat Ali by the name of Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya was the awaited Mahdi. The Umayyad put an end to it by crushing the armed revolt. Similarly, others who proclaimed to be the Mahdis, such as Ahmad ibn Abi Mahalli (1559-1613) of Morocco, and Muhammad Ahmad (1845-1885) of Sudan engaged in wars against their rulers. The latest militant Mahdi was Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Qatani who seized in 1979 the holiest shrine of the Muslims, Masjid al-Haram in Mecca getting 300 persons killed. However, some of the claimants had a peaceful approach to reform the Muslims. One of them was Syed Muhammad Jaunpuri (CE 1443-1505). His movement known as Mahdivia considers him to be the Khalifah of Allah on the earth. Another was Ali Muhammad Shirazi (1819 – 1850) who was the forerunner of Bahauddin (CE 1817- 1892) who founded the Bahai faith which now exists independent of Islam.

**Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (1835-1908) claimed that he was appointed by God as the awaited Imam Mahdi and the Promised Messiah(as),** and he founded the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 1889 with the clear message that the Mahdi and 'Isa bin Maryam are two titles for one and the same person. Indeed, he proved beyond a shadow of doubt that no one shall descend from heaven, and no one will come out of hiding to start the reign of bloodshed. As the Mahdi he is divinely guided, and he has the distinct characteristics of Jesus(as) son of Mary. His objective is to rejuvenate Islam through love and gentleness, to bring an end to religious wars, to establish peace and brotherhood in the world through the Unity of God and to unify mankind under the banner of the Holy Prophet(sa) of Islam who is a 'Mercy for all mankind'.





# IMAM THE MAHDI SUNNI PERSPECTIVE

By Dr. Khaula Rehman

Those who have been to Cordoba Mosque in Spain, first built in the eighth century, Taj Mahal in India, built 1632-1648, or the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, built 1609 to 1616, are aware of the glorious past of the Muslims.

But, the Muslims have been stagnant for the last few centuries and their political disgrace plummeted to its deepest abyss with the fall of the Ottoman Empire around the time of World War I.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) had prophesied the rise and fall of the Muslims:

"Prophethood will remain among you as long as Allah wills. Then He will take it away and Khilafat on the lines of Prophethood shall commence, and then, when Allah wills, He will take away this bounty also. Then in accordance with His Decree corrupt monarchy would be established, which will make people sad and constrained and then when this era will come to an end, in accord with another Decree of God, despotic kingship would emerge till the Mercy of God will descend and bring this era of tyranny and excess to an end. Then again, Khilafat on the precept of Prophethood shall be established."

Several landmarks in the gradual downfall of the Muslims can be tracked with a few historic dates. Genghis Khan and his grandson Hulagu Khan laid waste large Muslim lands in twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The last of the Muslims were kicked out of Spain and Europe in the year 1492. When the printing press was invented in Europe by the German printer Johannes Gutenberg in 1450 and Ottomans and Mughals chose not to benefit from learning and technology, to maintain the advantage of the political elite, the foundation was laid for further humiliation of the Muslims for centuries to come.



The Muslims in India lost the War of Independence against the British in 1857 and the Ottoman Empire was finally destroyed during the WWI.

The Muslims seemed to have some political resurgence after World War II, but since the 1990s, the social, political and even religious misery of the Muslims is no secret. Everyday we read some catastrophe in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Egypt, Syria or Gaza, to name a few.

No nation can live with a psyche of defeat and inferiority. No people can survive without hope. So, when the Muslims try to imagine the future, they are reminded of revival and renaissance of Islam and the Muslims.

When they examine their bright past with the dismal present, they find a ray of hope in several of the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad(sa) about Imam Mahdi and the second coming of Jesus(as) son of Mary.

Differences exist in the concept of the Mahdi between Sunni Muslims and adherents of the Shi'ah tradition. For Sunnis, the Mahdi is the Prophet Muhammad's successor, who is yet to come. For most Shi'ah Muslims, the Mahdi was born but disappeared and will remain hidden from humanity until he reappears to bring justice to the world, a doctrine known as the Occultation. For Twelver Shi'ah this "hidden Imam" is Muhammad al-Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam, who is in hiding.

There is a large collection of hadith on this subject, according to a famous contemporary Sunni Muslim leader, in Pakistan, Tahir ul Qadri, there are at least 200 hadiths on this subject.

Understanding a set of 200 prophecies and weaving those into a coherent story would certainly be a difficult undertaking, especially when one takes into account how different our world is from seventh century Arabia. To handle this dilemma the Sunni scholars, invariably have a simple solution of taking a literalist approach to some of the hadiths that they can easily fathom and generally ignoring or not commenting on the others.

Most say that the Mahdi's name will be Muhammad bin Abdullah, basing their thought on a simplistic understanding of the following and similar hadiths,

“Hadrat Abdullah bin Mas'ood reports from the Prophet, who said: The world will not come to pass until a man from among my family, whose name will be my name, rules over the Arabs.”

They are also quick to point out that Imam Mahdi will be from the progeny of the Prophet Muhammad himself, based on the following hadith: “Hadrat Umme Salmah, Prophet's wife, narrates that she heard the Prophet say: The promised Mahdi will be among my progeny, among the descendants of Fatima.”

They suggest that he will rule for seven years or nine years based on a few hadiths, for example, “Abu Sa'id al-Khudari narrated that the Prophet said: Our Mahdi will have a broad forehead and a pointed (prominent) nose. He will fill the earth with justice as it is filled with injustice and tyranny. He will rule for seven years.”

It is agreed by all Sunni scholars that Imam Mahdi will come near the Day of Judgment, based on the hadith, “Even if the entire duration of the world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left before Doomsday, Allah will expand that day to such length of time as to accommodate the kingdom of a person from my progeny, who will be called by my name. He will fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny (by then).”

They generally have a utopic vision of the future, based on the literal understanding the following and related hadiths and generally cannot be bothered to have a more realistic and pragmatic understanding of these hadiths, “Abu Sa'id al-Khudari has related a tradition from the Prophet who declared: The earth will be filled with injustice and corruption. At that time, a man from among my progeny will rise and will rule for seven or nine years and will fill the earth with justice and equity.”

There are several hadiths talking about the geo-political situation and wars in Arabia, Iraq and Syria at the time of Imam Mahdi. These hadiths give an impression of fighting with swords and riding on horses during warfare. These are certainly conditions of past centuries and most Sunni scholars do not try to genuinely interpret these metaphors in light of present geo-political and military realities. Occasionally, however, they do try to take geo-political and military realities into consideration, at least in part, while interpreting this vast hadith literature. For example, in a more than four hour lecture on this topic, in Urdu, Tahir ul Qadri, concludes that Imam Mahdi will come in the year 2204 AH, seven centuries from now, as the present day realities are not conducive to a military victory of the Muslims over the non-Muslims.

He has also taken a break from the literalists in these Youtube videos in confessing that the donkey of the Dajjal (i.e., the antichrist), who is to come at the time of coming of Mahdi, according to hadiths, is not a literal donkey and is in fact an airplane, which can travel large distances in minutes or hours. Several hadiths talk about coming of Jesus son of Mary along with the coming of Imam Mahdi. Most Sunni Muslims take them to be separate persons, based on the literal interpretations of some of the hadiths, conveniently forgetting that there are other hadiths that talk about them being the same person. Hafiz Muzaffar Ahmad in his short Urdu book, whose title translated into English is, *The Meeting of the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Centuries: A Dilemma for the Muslims*, has quoted two such hadiths from the famous hadiths collections by Ibn Majah and Ahmad bin Hanbal.

If we realize that a literal understanding of all the scores of hadiths about Imam Mahdi is logically not possible, because of mutual contradictions and changing of times and world's realities and if we honestly and humbly try to interpret all the prophecies in the Qur'an and hadiths about the Latter Days, about Mahdi and Jesus son of Mary, then a different reality emerges, at odds with what is generally presented by the Sunni and Shi'ah scholars.

### Epilogue

Many Sunni Muslim scholars had been awaiting the coming of Imam Mahdi in the 14th century of Hijrah, which ended on November 8, 1980. Hafiz Muzaffar Ahmad in his short book, *The Meeting of the Fourteenth and the Fifteenth Centuries: A Dilemma for the Muslims*, has tabulated several such references.

Many still hope and assert that his coming is imminent, for example a prominent Sunni scholar from Turkey, Adnan Oktar (born 1956), who writes under the pen name Harun Yahya, had the following to say in one of his books:

“This blissful time, for which people have been deeply longing for hundreds of years will, according to the indications in the hadiths, last ‘for more than half a century.’ And little time now remains until these historic glad tidings, of such great importance to the Islamic world, finally come about. By Allah's leave, the timing given by the Prophet (sa) in the hadiths for the coming of Hazrat Mahdi (as) is now imminent. The century we are living in, or ‘Hijri 1400s,’ is ‘the century of the Mahdi,’ by Allah's leave. ‘The coming of the Prophet Jesus (as) and Hazrat Mahdi (as),’ that people have been keenly awaiting and praying for over the centuries will, by His leave, take place in this century. Sincere Muslims living in this century and who eagerly, hopefully and enthusiastically await the coming of these historic individuals will, insha'Allah, be able to enjoy the honor

of being among the Prophet Jesus' (as) and Hazrat Mahdi's (as) helpers, friends and close followers. They will be able to support the Prophet Jesus (as) and Hazrat Mahdi (as) in their intellectual struggle against irreligious movements, in spreading the moral values of Islam across the world, in uniting the Islamic world and in causing the Christian world to follow the Qur'an and the true faith. Being among the supporters of these holy individuals, they will have the honor of being among those instrumental in the Muslim world attaining the peace, happiness, plenty and abundance for which it has longed for the last 14 centuries."

This is exactly what the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been saying for the last 125 years, about the timing of Imam Mahdi's arrival.

If one reads all the materials on the subject of Imam Mahdi, second coming of Jesus son of Mary and the Latter Days, in unison, one is left with no choice but to seriously examine the claims of Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. This becomes especially true, when we recall that the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said:

***"When you find the Mahdi,  
perform pledge of allegiance at his hands.  
You must go to him,  
even if you have to reach him,  
crawling on your knees, over the glaciers.  
He is the guided one  
and representative of Allah."***

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# RELIGION & SCIENCE

## Natural Selection or Divine Choice?

By Zia H Shah MD, Chief Editor of the Muslim Times

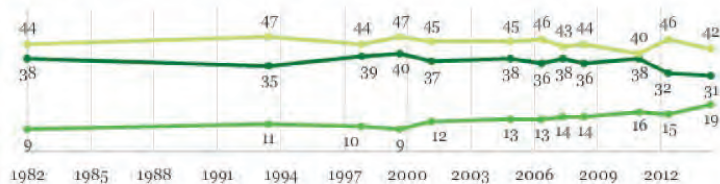
To grasp the paramount importance of the issue, 'Natural Selection or Divine Choice,' it is insightful to review the Gallup polls performed in the USA over the last three decades.

The graph below describes three groups in the US, with different shades of green and how they have varied in percentage of population from 1982 until date. To appreciate the article better, you can choose to place yourself in one of these groups. I will call these groups:

Guided Evolution, Blind Evolution and Creationism:

*Which of the following statements comes closest to your views on the origin and development of human beings – (human beings have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God guided this process, human beings have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God had no part in this process, (or) God created human beings pretty much in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so)?*

■ % Humans evolved, with God guiding  
■ % Humans evolved, but God had no part in process  
■ % God created humans in present form



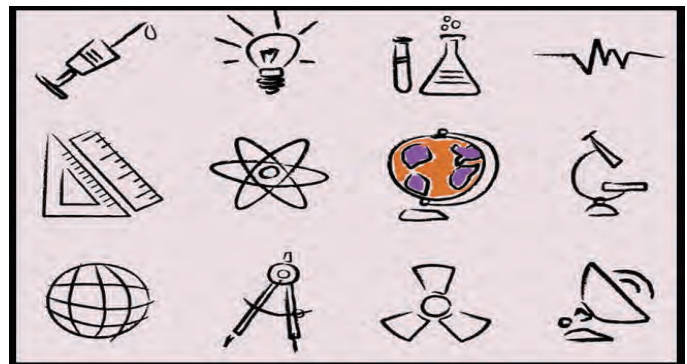
GALLUP

The percentage of Americans who take the Biblical account literally and believe that God created humans in the present form has remained constant in a narrow range, 40-47%, between 1982-2014. Those Americans who are comfortable with atheistic point of view or Blind Evolution has increased in the last 3 decades from nine to nineteen percent.

The third camp that believes that God created through the process of evolution has ranged between 31-38%. This is the camp of Guided Evolution, where I belong and will explain this view from Islamic perspective, in this article.

These three camps exist in all regions and all religions, even though the proportions would differ. We can find these same groups among those coming from the Muslim tradition, even though I would guess that those agreeing with Blind Evolution would be in smaller numbers. But, certainly there are many among Muslims, who deny evolution completely, uphold Creationism.

I have not known any religious person deny the science of Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, Charles Boyle or Robert Hooke. But, many feel comfortable in denying the discoveries of Charles Darwin and other biologists, who have followed him. How can otherwise rational and good people be so discriminatory between different scientists?



Human memory leads to the illusion-of-truth effect, meaning that we are more likely to rate those statements true that we are familiar with, regardless of their veracity. As such familiarity impairs judgment and prevents people from noticing let alone accepting the obvious limitations in their views.

Familiar seems true and unfamiliar, however logical and rational, seems fictional. The believers have all read the story of Adam and Eve in their scripture. The believers read the story literally, regardless of God's intent and hence their hostility towards all things evolution and Charles Darwin.

I will explain my position about Guided Evolution through explaining three concepts, naturalism, God of the gaps and Quantum indeterminacy or physics.



## Naturalism and Al-Baatin God

The success of scientific enterprise in the last few centuries has shown humanity the power of trying to understand nature in a consistent and reproducible manner, excluding belief in supernatural, in likes of jinns and demons. Encyclopedia Britannica describes naturalism as:

"Naturalism, in philosophy, a theory that relates scientific method to philosophy by affirming that all beings and events in the universe (whatever their inherent character may be) are natural. Consequently, all knowledge of the universe falls within the pale of scientific investigation. Although naturalism denies the existence of truly supernatural realities, it makes allowance for the supernatural, provided that knowledge of it can be had indirectly—that is, that natural objects be influenced by the so-called supernatural entities in a detectable way.

Naturalism presumes that nature is in principle completely knowable. There is in nature a regularity, unity, and wholeness that implies objective laws, without which the pursuit of scientific knowledge would be absurd. Man's endless search for concrete proofs of his beliefs is seen as a confirmation of naturalistic methodology. Naturalists point out that even when one scientific theory is abandoned in favour of another, man does not despair of knowing nature, nor does he repudiate the "natural method" in his search for truth. Theories change; methodology does not."

Despite prevailing naturalism in science, believing Christians have traditionally understood miracles to be in violation of natural laws and, as such, they have much to fear from naturalism. For details of Christian vulnerability on this issue, please see my previous article in *Alislam-eGazette*, which was a commentary on a BBC documentary and is titled, *A BBC Four Documentary: Is God Dead? (Metaphysics, Religion and Science)*. The Muslims, especially those belonging to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have no such fear of naturalism, as we believe miracles to be within the scope of Natural Law.

Nevertheless, I am not suggesting to embrace naturalism in its totality, as sometimes it even implies a negation of a Transcendent God or any revelation from Him. For example Wikipedia has to say:

“Naturalism is ‘the idea or belief that only laws of nature (physical law) (as opposed to supernatural or spiritual) and forces operate in the world; the idea or belief that nothing exists beyond the natural world.’ Adherents of naturalism (i.e., naturalists) assert that natural laws are the rules that govern the structure and behavior of the natural universe, that the changing universe at every stage is a product of these laws.



'Naturalism can intuitively be separated into a [metaphysical] and a methodological component.' Metaphysical here refers to the philosophical study of the nature of reality. Some philosophers equate naturalism with materialism. For example, philosopher Paul Kurtz argues that nature is best accounted for by reference to material principles. These principles include mass, energy, and other physical and chemical properties accepted by the scientific community. Further, this sense of naturalism holds that spirits, deities, and ghosts are not real and that there is no 'purpose' in nature. Such an absolute belief in naturalism is commonly referred to as metaphysical naturalism. In contrast, assuming naturalism in working methods, without necessarily considering naturalism as an absolute truth with philosophical entailments, is called methodological naturalism. The subject matter here is a philosophy of acquiring knowledge."

I, like many other Muslims, am all for methodological naturalism, as the God of Islam is Al-Batin or hidden and we can never catch His hand or hands working in our material world, as He is not material and He is subtle and He has Himself told us in the Holy Qur'an:

"He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hidden (Al Baatin), and He knows all things full well." (Al Quran 57:4).

And:

"Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware." ( 6:104).

And:

"And assuredly, We have created man and We know what his physical self whispers to him, and We are nearer to him than even his jugular vein" ( 50:17).

But, I do not believe in metaphysical naturalism. Whereas, I do not believe in jinns, demons and ghosts, I do believe in certain things that are not material and not explained by strict materialism. The Holy Qur'an in countless places describes the Transcendent God, His creation of the universe and His continued Providence, His revelation to humans in dreams and otherwise, human conscience, human soul and our free will.

### God of the gaps

God of the gaps is a theological perspective in which gaps in scientific knowledge are taken to be evidence or proof of God's existence. The term was invented by Christian theologians not to discredit theism but rather to point out the fallacy of relying on teleological arguments for God's existence. Some use the phrase to refer to a form of the argument from ignorance fallacy.

The concept, although not the exact wording, goes back to Henry Drummond, a 19th-century evangelist lecturer, from his Lowell Lectures on The Ascent of Man. He chastises those Christians who point to the things that science cannot yet explain—"gaps which they will fill up with God"—and urges them to embrace all nature as God's, as the work of "... an immanent God, which is the God of Evolution, is infinitely grander than the occasional wonder-worker, who is the God of an old theology."

We, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has no use for pushing and promoting God of the gaps, to enhance our theology, as the Founder of our community, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote:

"If God has created the universe, then one can be certain that in keeping with His infinite entity, He would have left innumerable ways to influence the universe so that His divinity is not suspended in any way at any time."

In other words God influences our world through natural means only.

The question arises, what are those natural means within the Natural Law that provide for Providence of God, through which God could influence our material world. This leads to my next subject of Quantum physics.

### Quantum indeterminacy or physics

It is said that Pierre Simon Laplace had presented Napoleon with a copy of his work, who had heard that the book contained no mention of God. Napoleon, who was fond of imposing embarrassment, received it with the remark, "Laplace, they tell me you have written this large book on the system of the universe, and have never even mentioned its Creator." Laplace is said to have replied, "Sir, I have no need of that hypothesis." And so it goes. The apparent so called self-sufficiency of our physical universe has caused many a scientist, since Laplace to move away from the idea of a Creator of the universe or the God Hypothesis.

Given his complete confidence in both methodological and metaphysical naturalism, Laplace claimed:

"We may regard the present state of the universe as the effect of its past and the cause of its future. An intellect which at a certain moment would know all forces that set nature in motion, and all positions of all items of which nature is composed, if this intellect were also vast enough to submit these data to analysis, it would embrace in a single formula the movements of the greatest bodies of the universe and those of the tiniest atom; for such an intellect nothing would be uncertain and the future just like the past would be present before its eyes."

Despite Laplace's tall claims, in the three great monotheistic religions, Islam, Christianity and Judaism, God is viewed as a supreme, transcendent being, beyond matter space and time, and yet the foundation of all that meets our senses that is described in terms of matter, space, and time. That is the Al Baatin or the Hidden God of monotheism. Furthermore, this God is not the god of deism, who created the world and then left it alone, or the god of pantheism, who is equated with all of existence. The Islamic and the Judeo-Christian God is a nanosecond-by-nanosecond participant in each event that takes place in every cubic nanometer of the universe. He has full knowledge of all things. God listens to every thought and participates in each action of his very special creation.

Quantum physics was a missing piece of information in physics that took away hard determinism and restored free will and Divine Providence. It became an interface between the material and the immaterial, the profane and the sacred, the tangible and the intangible and of course a meeting point of the knowable and the unknowable. The scientific aspect of Quantum physics can be best read in a scientific treatise but to appreciate the mystery and aura about it, one should bank on quotes of the leading experts in the field, until one becomes an expert in one's own right. So, here I reproduce a few:

**Werner Heisenberg:** "The atoms or elementary particles themselves are not real; they form a world of potentialities or possibilities rather than one of things or facts."

**Niels Bohr:** "Anyone not shocked by quantum mechanics has not yet understood it."

**Pascual Jordan:** "Observations not only disturb what is to be measured, they produce it."

**Eugene Wigner:** "When the province of physical theory was extended to encompass microscopic phenomena through the creation of quantum mechanics, the concept of consciousness came to the fore again. It was not possible to formulate the laws of quantum mechanics in a fully consistent way without reference to the consciousness."

**Bernard d'Espagnat:** "The doctrine that the world is made up of objects whose existence is independent of human consciousness turns out to be in conflict with quantum mechanics and with facts established by experiment."

**Richard Feynman:** "Nobody understands quantum mechanics."

**Albert Einstein:** "I can't accept quantum mechanics because I like to think the moon is there even if I am not looking at it."

**Professor Daniel Robinson:** "The prospect has been raised that consciousness and quantum physics are in some bizarre way interdependent. One of the most influential schools of quantum physics, the so-called Copenhagen school, has argued that the results of experiments at the micro level can be understood only in terms of the influence of the act of observation itself."

In other words, Quantum physics is the seat of consciousness, human soul, free will and Providence of God and by its very nature will remain unknowable to a significant degree, for all times to come.

## Epilogue

What appears to be natural selection to the naturalist can be considered, with equal validity, to be Divine Providence, for one who is open to the possibility of Transcendent God of the Abrahamic faiths, with Quantum physics serving as the interface, the buffer zone, the meeting point of the Infinite and the finite.

A proper understanding of limits of science and theology, provides a perfect resolution of science and religion conflict, a possible end to the debates since the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, in 1859.

Science is only study of nature and cannot give a verdict on supernatural as long as it does not contravene the Laws of Nature or naturalism. With this understanding, the Christian understanding of miracles is ruled out, but, the Islamic understanding of Providence succeeds, giving us an epiphany, a genuine understanding of Guided Evolution, which does not propose 'God of the gaps.' Neither in the past, not now and nor in the future. Never!



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# THE IMAM MAHDI ACCORDING TO SHI'AH BELIEF

By, Shahina Bashir

Belief in the existence of Al Mahdi (The Guide) is a central part of the Shi'ah doctrine. Among the different sects of Shi'ahs the 'Twelvers' believe that the Twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi is the Mahdi whose advent is being anticipated by all Muslims. He is the son of the eleventh Imam, Hasan al-Askari. Muhammad al-Mahdi was born in the year 869 A.D. in the city of Samarra in Iraq.

## Why do the Twelver Shi'ahs believe that Muhammad al-Mahdi is the Promised Mahdi?

The belief that Muhammad al-Mahdi is the Promised Mahdi is based on certain Ahadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa). According to these Ahadith, the conclusion is that Al-Mahdi is from the family of the Holy Prophet(sa) through his daughter Hadrat Fatima(ra). Some of these traditions are as follows:

1. Reported on the authority of Hadrat Umm Salma by 'Ali b. Nufayl, the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said, "Al-Mahdi is from my family ('itra) from the sons of Fatima." (Mizan, III: 160; Ibn Majah, Sunan, II:1368; al-Musannaf, XI:372).
2. On the authority of Ibn 'Abbas, the Prophet is reported to have said, "How shall Allah destroy a nation whose beginning is myself, whose end is Jesus and whose very centre is al-Mahdi, who will be from my family?" (al-Thalabi, 'Ara'is al-Majalis:363; al-Kanji, op.cit., 327).

## Occultation of the Twelfth Imam

Whereas the Sunni Muslims hold the belief that the awaited Imam Mahdi will be born at a certain time in the latter days, the Twelver Shi'ahs believe that Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi is the Promised Mahdi who is now in hiding and will reappear in public when Allah deems to be the appropriate time. This occultation appeared in two phases. The first, referred to as the Minor Occultation was from 874-941. During this period the Imam is believed to have been in contact with his followers through deputies who acted as agents between him and his followers. In 873 after the death of his father, Imam al-Mahdi was hidden from the authorities of the Abbassid Caliphate as a precautionary measure. No one knew about the location where he hid. A select few associates of Imam Hasan al-Askari became the mediators known as Saf'ir.

They were, Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Asadi, Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Uthman, Abul Qasim Husayn ibn Ruh Nawbakhti, and Abul Hasan Ali ibn Muhammad al-Samarri.

By the year 941 all the deputies had died and so ushered the era of the second phase or the Major Occultation. The second phase is a longer period and continues till date. According to some Shi'ah sources and scholars, Imam Mahdi will appear in Makkah at a time when God decides. The appropriate time will come when enough loyal supporters are there to help his cause.

## Why is Al-Mahdi still alive?

The Shi'ahs believe that Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi must remain alive so that there is no gap in the chain of leadership. It was necessary that he should be born in 869 so that he could succeed his father al-Askari and take the role of the Twelfth Imam. It is also believed that Imam Mahdi, though in occultation, does not mean that he is out of reach. There are select privileged members with whom he is in contact. However, those who are in contact with him are not permitted to disclose any details of his whereabouts to the general public.

Concerning the lifespan of al-Mahdi, the argument made is that the Qur'an gives ample examples of people with unusually long lives. The most common example cited is that of Hadrat Jesus(as). Most Muslims, regardless of the sects, believe that Hadrat Jesus(as) did not die on the cross and was in fact physically raised to the heavens. He is waiting for the time of his return to earth. Since these Muslims do not believe that the Second Coming has taken place it means that Jesus(as) has been alive for more than 2,000 years. Similarly, other instances cited from the Qur'an are that Hadrat Noah(as) lived for 950 years and the Companions of the Cave lived for more than 300 years.

## Signs recorded in the Shi'ah traditions about the advent of the Promised Mahdi

Bihar-ul-Anwar, meaning "Sea of Lights" is a collection of Ahadith compiled by the Shi'ah scholar Mulla Muhammad Baqir. These Ahadith give various signs related to the advent of the Promised Mahdi. Some of these are as follows:



**1.Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said,** “May Allah damn the diviners! O Abu Muhammad, before this matter there will be five signs; a call (from the heavens) on Ramadan, the rising of Sufyani, the rising of Khurasani, killing the pure innocent man, and a sinking in the desert. Before the advent of the Qaim there must be two plagues; the white plague and the red plague. The white plague is a sudden death and the red plague is killing by the sword. Qaim does not appear until his name will be called out from the heavens in the twenty-third night of Ramadan, which will be a night of Friday.”

**2.Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said,** “Before the appearance of Imam Qaimas there will occur the killing of ‘Buyuh’. When asked what is the meaning of the ‘killing of Buyuh’, the Holy Prophet(sa) replied, “Continuous bloodshed and killing.”

**3.Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said,** “A time will come when my Ummah will become impure from inside and attractive from the outside in order to acquire wealth. They will show off instead of gaining divine rewards. They will not fear Allah. Allah will punish all of them. At that time, people will supplicate like a drowning man, but their supplications will not be accepted.”

**4.Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) said,** “A time will come on my Ummah when only the name of the Holy Qur’an will remain. They will have only the title of Islam, while they will be far away from it. Their mosques will be filled apparently, but will be completely devoid of guidance. Their jurist will be the worst under this sky and mischief will start from them and return to them.”

### What was the mission of the Promised Mahdi?

According to the Nahj-ul-Balagha which is a collection of sermons and commentaries attributed to Hadrat Ali(ra) Imam Mahdi whose advent was prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) would come with the following mission:

“The Imam who will create a world state will make the ruling nations pay for their crimes against society. He will bring succor to humanity. He will take out the hidden wealth from the breast of the earth and will distribute it equitably amongst the needy deserving.

He will teach you simple living and high thinking. He will make you understand that virtue is a state of character which is always a means between the two extremes, and which is based upon equity and justice. He will revive the teaching of the Holy Qur’an and the traditions of the Holy Prophet after the world had ignored them as dead letters...

**He will protect and defend** himself with resources of science and supreme knowledge. His control over these resources will be complete. He will know how supreme they are and how carefully they have to be used. His mind will be free from desires of bringing harm and injury to humanity. Such a knowledge to him will be like the property which was wrongly possessed by others and for which he was waiting for the permission to repossess and use.

He, in the beginning, will be like a poor stranger unknown and uncared for, and Islam then will be in the hopeless and helpless plight of an exhausted camel who has laid down its head and is wagging its tail. With such a start he will establish an empire of God in this world. He will be the final demonstration and proof of God’s merciful wish to acquaint man with the right ways of life” (Nahj-ul-Balagha, Sermon 141 and 187).

The Sunni and Shi’ah traditions clearly indicate the advent of Imam Mahdi in the latter days. The present time is rife with signs which point toward the coming of the Messiah and Mahdi. Both the Sunni and Shi’ah Muslims are waiting for such a person. However, neither group truly understands how to recognize the Imam when he does arrive. Many Muslims have in reality given up in the belief of the advent of the Promised Mahdi/Messiah. Those who are in doubt say that when we have the Qur’an and the Sunnah then there is no need for any reformer to come for the revival of Islam. However, it is a fact that the Muslims of today have abandoned the Qur’an or if they are reading the holy Book, they are unable to understand its true meaning and message. They claim to follow the Sunnah of our beloved Master, the Prophet Muhammad(sa) but their actions are contrary to the teachings of Islam. It is only the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community who has recognized and accepted the Promised Mahdi who is none other than Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. We pray that the Muslim Ummah is able to set aside their prejudices and seek Allah’s help and guidance so that they may accept the Imam Mahdi and support him in achieving his goal and mission of bringing peace, justice, and equity on earth. Amen.

# THE MAHDI OF SUDAN

By Lubna R. Malik

Muhammad Ahmad bin Abdullah ("Ahmad") was born on August 12, 1844 in Lahab Island, Dungulah, in northern Sudan. Ahmad's family belonged to the family of Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) through the lineage of Holy Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Hadrat Hassan(ra). When Ahmad was a child, he moved with his family to the town of Karari where Ahmad's father, Abdullah, found a supply of timber for his boat-building business. Although Ahmad's siblings joined their father's business, Ahmad focused on religion and studied under Sheikh al-Amin al-Suwaylih, Sheikh Muhammad al-Dikayr Abdullah Khujali, Sheikh Nur al-Dai'am and Sheikh Muhammad Sharif. Through these different mentors, Ahmad decided to live a life of asceticism, mysticism and worship. Eventually, Ahmad himself was given the title of "sheikh" and began to travel around Sudan on religious missions teaching the Sammanujah sect of Islam.

In 1870, when Ahmad was about 26 years old, his family moved again in search of timber to Aba Island, just south of Khartoum. At Aba Island, Ahmad built a mosque and began teaching the Holy Qur'an. Very quickly, Ahmad gained a reputation as an excellent speaker and mystic on the Sammanujah sect of Islam, which focused on teaching that true Islam was to follow the Holy Qur'an and words of Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa), and to live a life of prayer, simplicity and virtue.



In 1872, Ahmad invited his former teacher, Sheikh Muhammad Sharif, to move to the neighboring area to Aba Island. As time passed, however, Ahmad and Sheikh Sharif had begun disputing over Sheikh Sharif's less stringent interpretations of Islam and possible resentment by Sheikh Sharif regarding Ahmad's growing popularity. This dispute eventually erupted into violence in 1878 between followers of Ahmad and Sheikh Sharif, respectively. Although the two were able to temporarily put aside their differences for a truce, Ahmad had become fully aware of Sheikh Sharif's less orthodox beliefs, including, most importantly, at the celebration of Sheikh Sharif's son's circumcision, at which there was dancing and music. When Ahmad expressed his disappointment and disapproval of such a celebration, Sheikh Sharif expelled Ahmad from the Sammanujah order and offered no option of forgiveness.

When Ahmad was unable to be readmitted into the Sammanujah order, he approached one of the rival Sammanujah sects under the leadership of Sheikh al-Quraishi wa al-Zayn and was readily accepted. As a member of this sect, Ahmad again traveled widely to teach Sammanujah Islam. Sheikh al-Quraishi broadly taught that the Mahdi would come from the Sammanujah sect and that the Mahdi would make himself known through a number of signs, some of which were from Hadith of Holy Prophet(sa), and some that were more local in origin, such as the prediction that the Mahdi would ride on Sheikh Al-Quraishi's pony. Shortly after being accepted into this new Sammanujah sect, Sheikh al-Quraishi died and Ahmad was recognized as his successor and the sect's new leader.

As Ahmad continued in this role, he made an announcement that would change his life and history. On June 29, 1881, Ahmad publicly announced his claim to be the Mahdi. It is important to note that Ahmad did not proclaim to be the Mahdi and the Messiah, or second coming of Prophet Jesus(as). Instead, Ahmad proclaimed that he was the Mahdi who had come to pave the way for the second coming of Prophet Jesus(as). Ahmad explained to his followers that he had been appointed as the Mahdi by a hadra, which is a gathering in Sufi tradition that consists of all the prophets from Prophet Adam(as) to Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa), who serves as the chair of this prophetic assembly, along with many Sufi holy men who are believed to have attained the highest level of affinity with the Divine during their lifetime.

Ahmad also explained that he was told at the hadra that he had been created from the sacred light at the center of Holy Prophet's heart, that the Mahdiyyah, or the followers of him as the Mahdi, was eternal, that the Mahdiyyah was an institution for the entire universe and that all living creatures had acknowledged Ahmad's claim as the Mahdi since Ahmad was born. To relate his life to that of Holy Prophet(sa), Ahmad referred to himself as Khalifat-ur-Rasool-Allah, or Successor of the Messenger of God, he named his four closest deputies as his khulafaa, or successors, and unlike other Sufi sects, he required that his followers be known as ansar, or the helpers, and not darwish. Ahmad also taught that the Mahdi would remain in the position of rulership for eight years until he would be defeated in battle against the Dajjal, or the Antichrist, after which the Dajjal would be vanquished by the return of Prophet Jesus(as).

Although Ahmad was popular among the Sammanujah clerics and some other sects, the ulema, or orthodox Islamic leaders, ridiculed Ahmad's claim to be the Mahdi. Among Ahmad's critics were the Sudanese ulema who were loyal to the Ottoman Sultan and who were employed by the Turco-Egyptian government, known as the Turkiyyah. These critics did not discredit the idea of the Mahdi, but instead that Ahmad was not the Mahdi. These critics pointed to Ahmad's lack of fulfillment of the prophecies regarding the coming of the Mahdi laid out in Hadith. In addition to the clerics, many other Muslims also turned on Ahmad because of some of his more radical changes, such as abolishing the four schools of Islamic jurisprudence in Sunni Islam, changing the Kalimah Shahaadah, or profession of faith, to read "Muhammad al-Mahdi is the Khalifah of the Prophet of God" and modifying the 5 Pillars of Islam to be 6 Pillars of Islam which included (1) Kalimah Shahaadah, as modified by Ahmad, (2) Salat, or daily prayers, (3) Ramadhan, or fasting, (4) Zakat, or financial contributions, (5) Jihad, or holy struggle and (6) belief in the Mahdiyyah. Ahmad also explained that he received his orders directly from God, with Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) serving as an intermediary between himself and God, thus retaining Holy Prophet Muhammad's status as the Seal of the prophets.

In response to Ahmad's claim and his adjusted beliefs, the Turkiyyah decided to arrest Ahmad. A military expedition was sent out to carry out this task, but the Turkiyyah forces were ambushed and annihilated by Ahmad's followers. In response to this attempt, Ahmad declared jihad against the Turkiyyah and declared:

I am the Mahdi, the Successor of the Prophet of God. Cease to pay taxes to the infidel Turks and let everyone who finds a Turk kill him, for the Turks are infidels.

Ahmad then led a series of successful military campaigns against the Turkiyyah. As Ahmad and his forces battled the Turkiyyah, the Mahdiyyah established many of its aforementioned theological and political doctrines and promulgated such doctrines among the Ansar. Ahmad and his forces eventually succeeded against the Turkiyyah with the fall of Khartoum in January 1885.

With Sudan no longer under Turco-Egyptian rule, Ahmad formed the government and the Mahdiyyah replaced Islam as the religion of Sudan. This official state religion of the Mahdiyyah also entailed various changes to Islamic Shari'ah, including that loyalty to Ahmad was essential to true belief in Islam as aforementioned. Ahmad also ordered for the burning of various books of law and theology that were from the prior Turco-Egyptian regime.

Six months after taking over Sudan, on June 22, 1885, at the age of 40, Ahmad died unexpectedly of typhus in Khartoum. Ahmad had planned for his eventual death by choosing three khulafaa who would replace him, an attempt to follow the example of Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa). However, because Ahmad had selected three successors, the period after his death was full of disarray as the three successors fought amongst each other for six years until, in 1891, Abdallahi ibn Muhammad took over the administration of the nascent Mahdist state. After seven years as ruler, in 1898, Abdallahi ibn Muhammad was defeated, Ahmad's tomb was destroyed and Ahmad's bones were thrown into the Nile River.





# FULFILLING THE TASKS OF MAHDI

By Rabia Mir

Every human group, socio-political or religious is defined, typically, by its founder. Founders of movements determine the purpose of the movement which they spearhead. That is, they define the goal to be obtained, lay out the path best suited to reach that goal and provide direction on how to travel the chosen path. It is by these methods that a founding father may ensure that his followers will continue his work and strive for his cause even after his passing.

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah(as) of the latter days founded the Ahmadiyya Movement within Islam. However, unlike worldly leaders, the Promised Messiah(as) established the Ahmadiyya sect within Islam in accordance with Divine Will. As such, his purpose, path and means of pursuance were all efforts sanctioned and striven for by God Himself.

This article will lay out what the intended purpose of the Promised Messiah's(as) advent was, how he strove towards fulfilling that purpose and what means he adopted to that end. The article will then go into how his followers, members of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at, can, are and must continue his work.

## Purpose of the Advent of the Promised Messiah(as):

The purpose of the Promised Messiah's (as) coming was primarily two-fold. His purpose was to address and redress the assaults that were being launched against Islam both from within and from without the fold of Islam. That is, the purpose of his advent was the reformation of Muslims and the refutation of the allegations made against Islam. And, by way of such refutations, his purpose was to establish the superiority of Islam over all other religions.

## Reformation and Refutation: An Intertwined Exercise

To verify the validity of the claim of the Promised Messiah(as), the prophecy relating to his necessity must be judged. That is, if the Messiah was supposed to come in the latter days for reformation of Muslims and refutation of allegations against Islam, were such measures even necessary? Indeed, the despicable state of Muslims and the disgraceful allegations against Islam are no small secret. These facts are known the world over as Muslims decline into a state of ever deepening degradation, which opens up their religion to a concerted and consistent effort of attacks.



Muslims today have been labeled terrorists and though we proclaim far and wide that not all Muslims are so disposed in their viewpoints, it is difficult to stand against the testimony of fact wherein violence is increasing throughout the Muslim world. Although we are engaged in a constant struggle to distinguish between Islam and so called Muslims, it remains painfully difficult to assert the distinction between the two when the latter claim the former as the basis for their misdeeds. It has become a gargantuan task to deter the West from defaming Islam, its' Book, and its Prophet, when the followers of our faith are proclaiming such defamation themselves, by way of their actions.



It is clear that reformation of the adherents of Islam and the refutation of allegations against it was necessary and its harbinger was timely. So how was this reformation and refutation meant to take place? What is the path leading to it and what is the best means of traversing that path, as determined by the Reformer?

### **The Promised Messiah's(as) Method and Means**

The Promised Messiah(as) undertook the task of spreading the true teachings of Islam in order to illuminate their beauty to the Muslim Ummah. At the time of his immediate advent, scores upon scores of Muslims were leaving the fold of Islam, disillusioned and disheartened, in order to embrace Christianity. The Promised Messiah(as) took it upon himself to study with diligence and devotion the Holy Qur'an so as to comprehend completely Islamic principles, Quranic injunctions, the life and character of the Holy Prophet(sa) and the true nature of the One True God. He went on to imbibe such knowledge in his person, developing an upright and righteous character. Such a character demonstrated to others the beauty of Islamic teachings, as naturally people associated his conduct with his values.

He was thus able to prove Islam as a noble religion, for only then would its adherent be of such a noble stature. He not only prayed, fasted and paid the Zakat, all with immense enthusiasm, but he also fulfilled his rights to his relations, his neighbours and those in need. He thus fulfilled to the utmost, the rights of God and of God's creation. And his doing so, all in the name of Islam, strengthened the potential for righteousness amongst Muslims and strengthened Islam itself against attacks and accusations.

But the Promised Messiah(as) went a step further; he did not simply keep this knowledge to himself. As he immersed himself deeper in spirituality, he remained true to the teachings of his beloved Master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad(sa) and continued to engage with people, Muslim and non-Muslim alike, striving to serve humanity primarily by lifting the shroud of ignorance that had benighted the teachings of Islam.

To this end, he contributed regularly to local journals and wrote the immensely famous and deeply respected "Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya," in an effort to establish the truth of the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet(sa) by logical means and spiritual insight. He then went on to voice an open challenge to other faiths to prove him wrong along those same means. A challenge which few took up and those that did failed miserably.

Thus, the Promised Messiah(as)'s path, leading to the goal of reformation and refutation, was vigorous assimilation of spiritual knowledge and the dissemination of such knowledge with the absolute conviction of its truth. But the means of traversing this path, towards the goals of reformation and refutation, was the assimilation and dissemination of knowledge, pursued with a spiritual fervour. He did not merely study Islam but also studied the language in which it was revealed in order to delve into the depths of the scripture. With this effort and with Divine inspiration, he was able to not only enlighten the Muslim Ummah, but also refute any allegations against Islamic teachings. Further, he studied other religions so as to understand their teachings, aptly judge their development and to effectively refute any accusations leveled against Islam that supposedly stemmed from the scriptures of those faiths.

### **Our Methods: A Reflection of the Reformer's**

As Ahmadi Muslims, we have recognized the Imam of the Time. But this is not enough. We must strive to continue his cause. That is, we must take up the task of reforming our fellow Muslims and refuting all and any allegations against Islam, and thus proving the truth of Islam. But each of these tasks requires some fundamental preparation. We can only reform others, once we have reformed ourselves.

The Holy Qur'an states:

"Do you enjoin others to do what is good and forget your own selves, while you read the Book?"(2:45).

Further, we can only guard our religion against onslaughts when we are well acquainted with each and every room and alleyway of the structure we are striving to secure. And we must also have sound knowledge or intelligence on the nature of the attacks being carried out, by whom, to what extent, to what end, etc.

Our goals are clearly defined. What is the path to be taken to achieve these goals? According to Khalifat-ul-Masih V(aba), we can only effectively reform ourselves when we have true communion with God, and this is only possible by establishing devout prayer. We must also strive to study the Holy Qur'an with meaning, commentary, historical context, and overall significance and strive to act on it. We must study the life of the Holy Prophet(sa) and emulate his actions. And finally, we must read the books of the Promised Messiah(as) if we are, with our limited spirituality, to gain greater insight into both our Book and our Prophet, and through them into the nature and attributes of Allah Almighty.

It is only once we are sound in our knowledge and upright in our character that we can effectively cause the message of the Promised Messiah(as) to reach the corners of the earth. We can convey the coming of the Messiah boldly and loudly, but such proclamations will be devoid of strength and unable to take root if we do not truly convey the truth of his message. That is, we must convey it by not making declarations of faith and writing grandiose articles, but also by means of our actions, by the uprightness of our characters and the strength and soundness of our convictions.

Likewise, we can only stand strong against the unending barrage of fire aimed at Islam, if the shield with which we defend it is strong. And even if the shield is strong, we will remain susceptible if we cannot bear the shield as it is meant to be borne. How is it meant to be borne? How are we meant to effectively repel the attacks of those who desire to see us fall? By obedience to the Institution of Khilafat. For if a party is under siege and lacks the leadership to hold it together, the battle is as good as lost.

The Holy Qur'an states:

"Verily, Allah loves those who fight in His cause arrayed in solid ranks, as though they were a strong structure cemented with molten lead"(61:5).

The Khalifa is the cement that holds this structure together through all kinds of weather. Adherence to his commands and absolute obedience to him, is the molten lead that enables us to thrive, to stand strong in the face of assault and the stronger we are the more effectively we can repel our enemy. True reformation demands absolute obedience to Khilafat. Therefore, the more deeply devoted we are to Khilafat, the more sound our reformation and thereby, the more sound our refutation of allegations.

A captain determines the course of his ship. The founder of the Ahmadiyya movement within Islam taught us, under Divine guidance, our spiritual goal, the path to achieve it, and the means of traveling that path. The goal being reformation and refutation of allegations against Islam. The path being to self-reform and gain knowledge in order to effectively refute any charges and thereby establish the truth of Islam, and the method of traveling it adherence to the commands of the Khalifat-ul-Waqt.

And should we fail in fulfilling the tasks of Al-Mehdi, the Holy Quran states:

"If He please, He can take you away, O people, and bring others in your stead; and Allah has full power to do that"(4:134).



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# **HAADITH** SAYINGS OF THE **PROPHET** MUHAMMAD(sa)

**"The best among you are the best in character"  
(Bukhari)**

**A man asked the Prophet, "What Islamic traits are the best?" The Prophet said, "Feed the people, and greet those whom you know and those whom you do not know."  
(Bukhari)**

**"The best of all charity is that you give it while you are healthy and desirous (of that money), hoping to become wealthy but fearing poverty. Don't delay until you are about to breathe your last and then you say, 'This is for 'so and so' and this is for 'so and so', for indeed, it has already been written that 'so and so' would receive that."  
(Abu Daud)**

**Narrated Hadrat 'Aisha: The Prophet was asked, "What deeds are loved most by Allah?" He said, "The most regular constant deeds even though they may be few." He added, "Don't take upon yourselves, except the deeds which are within your ability."  
(Bukhari)**

**"The best of which man can leave behind for himself are three: a righteous child who supplicates for him, an ongoing charity whose reward continues to reach him and knowledge which others benefit from after him."  
(Ibn Hibban)**

**It was narrated that Ibn 'Umar said: "I was with the Messenger of Allah and a man from among the Ansar came to him and greeted the Prophet with salam. Then he said: 'O Messenger of Allah, which of the believers is best?' He said: 'He who has the best manners among them.' He said: 'Which of them is wisest?' He said: 'The one who remembers death the most and is best in preparing for it. Those are the wisest.'"  
(Ibn Majah)**





# NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

## Islam is rejuvenating “British values”

Source: The Independent

**Islam is rejuvenating “British values”, the former Archbishop of Canterbury has claimed while lambasting sections of the press for presenting Muslims as “un-British”.**

Rowan Williams was giving a speech at the annual Living Islam Festival in Lincolnshire on Friday, discussing what British values were and how Muslims could affect them.

He said one of the greatest gifts to Britain had been bringing back “open, honest and difficult public discussion”, the Times reported.

Asked if he thought Islam was restoring British values, he said: “Yes. I’m thinking of the way in which, for example, in Birmingham we have seen a local parish and a mosque combining together to provide family services and youth activities, both acting out of a very strong sense that this is what communities ought to do.”

Dr Williams was one of several speakers at the event organised by the Islamic Society of Britain, which saw thousands of people gather for four days of talks, debates, music, worship and bazaars.

The now Master of Magdalene College in Cambridge praised both Christianity and Islam for working towards community cohesion and promoting a sense of duty.

But in comments reported by the Guardian, he also objected to the notion of British values, saying they should be more universal.

“The setting-up therefore of British values against any kind of values, whether Muslim or Christian, just won’t do,” he said.



## While we persecute you

Daily Times: by Aisha Fayyaza Sarwari

Persecution has existed since antiquity. You have to, however, be a special kind of unfortunate to be persecuted by Muslims. There will be no mercy. There will be no hope. No one in power will stand up for you, attempt to protect you or even throw your way two words of consolation. A caravan will be led by the vocal extremists and many silently approving groups across the socio-economic strata will walk with it, chin up. The only outrage there will be is going to be from your own community, and that too, measured — you cannot appear to be a formidable force or you will stroke the fires of hate to an extent that you will be annihilated. No one wants that, not even your enemies who want to instead poison you slowly with lethal fear, hunting you and eventually clenching the grey-wolf-like jaws on your jugular — your best will go first.

It is savagery at its worst, with everyone as an accomplice because there is a disagreement about your religious beliefs, under which many are unsure what kind of punishment is required. Yet there is no disagreement about random extremists acting out the judge, jury and executioner roles.



Luckily for the rest of the world, John Locke philosophised the separation of church and state: a rather simple concept but one that prevents not just the denial of civil rights on the basis of religion but also prevents religious persecution.

From among you was a man who loved the Pakistani cricket team and was crazy about the city of Lahore. He was a cardiologist, had three sons and lived and worked in the world that John Locke helped into law. This man decided that he wanted to come back to his country and serve at a hospital where thousands are treated for free in a town called Chenab Nagar. The place was previously called Rabwah.

He was unaware that those who consider themselves the truest of believers had been distributing posters that declared treatment from this hospital was forbidden. Would knowing this stop him? We do not know. On May 26, 2014, he went with his two-year-old son and wife to a nearby graveyard where he paid respects to his parents who had passed away. In this same graveyard you buried Pakistan's greatest mind, a Nobel laureate, Dr Abdus Salam. His grave, just like others in the graveyard, lies desecrated and the Islamic proclamations ashed-out by the authorities.

Did this man pay his respects to Dr Salam, who we do not own, celebrate or adorn national monuments for? We will never know. Some 94 men, women and children from your community were massacred by the Taliban in two mosques in Lahore on May 28, 2010. They are buried in the same cemetery. We do not know if he paid any respects to them either. We never will. He walked out towards his car. There, in front of his wife and baby, he was gunned down. Shot with 10 or more bullets in his body for being a lesser Muslim in the eyes of the killers. The man from your community, no longer with us, is Dr Mehdi Ali Qamar.

His assailants fled but this was not the reason that the perpetrators were not caught or brought to justice. The Lahore mosque massacres or the 137 others from your community who have been killed in the past three years still have their killers at large. None have been brought to justice. With other popular causes such as protesting drone attacks, yours is a bit difficult to rally around for politicians and civil society alike. There are a few things we do know about your community: you do not take up arms and you do not retaliate. You say this is the teaching of the Holy Quran. May your message triumph.



### **3 AHMADI MUSLIMS – INCLUDING 8 MONTH OLD BABY AND 7 YEAR OLD GIRL - KILLED IN PAKISTAN BY HATE FILLED EXTREMIST MOB**

- **8 houses burned – victims left to die – police stand by**
- **Pregnant woman loses her child**
- **Attack takes place in Kachi-Pump in Gujranwala**

It is with great regret and devastation that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community confirms that 3 of its members, including a 7 year old child and an 8 month old infant, have been murdered by local extremists in the area of Kachi-Pump in Gujranwala, Pakistan in a sectarian attack. They were martyred for the sole reason that they were Ahmadi Muslims, whilst local police stood by and watched the massacre. The deceased are Mrs Bushra Bibi, (exact age not yet known - in her 50s), and her two granddaughters, Hira aged 7 and Kainaat aged 8 months.

Further, Mrs Mubashara Bibi, who was 7 months pregnant, suffered a miscarriage. 8 other women and children are being treated for burns.

#### **FACTS:**

- At 8pm local time on 27 July 2014, anti-Ahmadi extremists gathered for a pre-planned 'protest' at Kachi-Pump in Gujranwala at a place where more than 15 Ahmadi Muslim families lived close to each other.
- The extremists gathered on the pretext that an Ahmadi youth had defaced a picture of the Khana Ka'bah (the Sacred Mosque) on Facebook. This allegation is completely false.
- Soon the 'protest' turned into a violent and murderous attack where the homes of Ahmadi Muslims were burnt, ransacked and looted.
- In total 8 homes belonging to Ahmadi Muslims were burnt by anti-Ahmadi extremists.
- When the protest commenced 2 police vehicles were present but the on-duty police merely watched as the violence commenced.

- The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community immediately responded and sought to evacuate the houses. However, due to the extent of the flames they were unable to evacuate one home in time and so 3 Ahmadi Muslims, Bushra Bibi, wife of Munir Ahmad and her 2 granddaughters Hira and Kainaat, daughters of Muhammad Buta, were left trapped and died of smoke inhalation and consequent suffocation.
- An Ahmadi Muslim lady, Mrs Mubashara Bibi, who was 7 months pregnant, suffered a miscarriage.
- 8 other Ahmadi Muslim women and children suffered injuries and are being treated for burns at a local hospital.
- The anti-Ahmadi extremists subsequently obstructed members of the fire brigade, who were forced to retreat before being able to extinguish the flames.
- Similarly, ambulances at the scene were pelted with stones.
- Later, more police officers attended the scene but took no immediate action whilst Ahmadi homes continued to be looted.

Following the attack, the Press Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Abid Khan said: "Ahmadi Muslims across the world have been left shocked and utterly grieved by this horrific and devastating attack in Pakistan. It is impossible to comprehend the levels of hatred and wickedness that could motivate anyone towards such merciless brutality. An 8 month old baby girl and her 7 year old sister have been killed along with their grandmother. A pregnant woman has lost her child. A number of others have been seriously injured and all of this simply because they were peaceful and law-abiding Ahmadi Muslims.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community will not ever take to the streets or respond with aggression. We respond only by bowing down before God Almighty, seeking His protection and help and affirming the Quranic injunction that 'Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return'.

It is hoped that the international community and media takes full and proper notice of these brutal and senseless murders. If such hatred and sectarianism is allowed to continue then it is inevitable that further tragedies will occur."

"May God grant elevate the status of the martyrs and grant patience to their loved ones"

### Remarks by Robert P. George at the Annual Ahmadiyya Muslim Convention Friday, August 15, 2014

As-Salaam Aleikum.

It is a pleasure to join you at this Jalsa Salana (annual convention). Thank you for inviting me to share some reflections, and for the high honor of receiving the Ahmadiyya Muslim community's 2014 Humanitarian Award. I'd like to frame my remarks by noting two dates, one from just weeks ago, the other of which we will mark just weeks from today.

On July 27 of this year, in Pakistan's Punjab province, an Ahmadi woman and her two granddaughters, including a seven-year-old and her baby sister, were burned alive in a mob attack which left nine other Ahmadis badly burned. And on September 7 we will mark the 40th anniversary of the passage of an amendment to Pakistan's Constitution which declared that Ahmadis are non-Muslims in that country. Taken together, these injustices underscore the plight of the Ahmadiyya today, especially in Pakistan, where the forces of intolerance and hatred continue their assault on your community and religious freedom.

This assault takes place in a world in which 75 percent of people, including millions of Ahmadiyya Muslims, live in countries which grossly violate this precious right. Simply stated, the war against the Ahmadiyya is part of a global war on freedom and dignity. So what is behind this global war? More than any other factor, it is the continued operation of a truly unique and monstrous idea—first introduced in the last century—that some have called totalitarianism. It's an idea that says that we can perfect the world if we grant fanatical leaders and political movements unlimited power and authority to remake humanity as they see fit—elevating these leaders and movements to godlike status, above every law and custom, every belief and institution, and every moral norm and precept in history.

In the 1930s and 1940s, this evil idea threatened the world through Nazism and other forms of fascism, which hijacked loyalty to nation as the vehicle for its unlimited aims. After World War II, with Nazism defeated, its greatest threat was from Communism, which hijacked economic class for the same purpose. By the close of the 20th century, these two movements had committed every crime imaginable, from assaults on conscience to the perpetration of genocide. When the dust had settled, nearly 150 million human beings had perished.

Today, while we still see that threat coming through Communism, particularly in China, which remains a world-class human rights and religious freedom violator, we see something else as well: We see how the same extremist, totalitarian impulse which drove Nazism and Communism has now hijacked religion as its latest vehicle, resulting in the same horrifying outcomes for humanity.

From ISIL and al Qaeda to the Taliban and the Iranian leadership, these new totalitarians have unleashed terror and tyranny on a global scale. Across the world, they have launched terror attacks on civilians, obliterating all traditional distinctions between combatants and non-combatants—exactly as the Nazis and Communists did.

In Iraq, they brutalize men, women, and children and threaten the lives and liberties of religious minorities and most of the Muslim majority. From Afghanistan, they launched the 9/11 attacks and seek again to destroy every human right, from religious freedom to the rights of women. In Pakistan, they have assassinated leaders and target both Muslims and religious minorities who dare to dissent from their beliefs. In Iran, they control the government and regularly execute religious dissenters while supporting terrorist groups around the world. And let me add that wherever the Ahmadiyya are violently persecuted, it is these extremist, totalitarian forces that are leading the charge.

Now let's be clear: These forces cannot possibly represent authentic Islam or any other religion. No religion on the face of the earth, including Islam, ever stood, as these forces do, and as their Nazi and Communist cousins did, for the idea that leaders and their followers may break any law, commit any crime, perpetrate any atrocity, without being accountable to anyone or anything.

And that leads us to a question: These extremist forces call themselves Islamic, but how can they be when they view hundreds of millions of Muslims, as well as non-Muslims, as legitimate targets for abuse and death? Make no mistake. This is not a struggle of religion against humanity. Rather it is a struggle of tyranny against freedom—the same struggle that Nazism and Communism waged against the world in their day.

Violent Islamist extremists who murder, rape, and pillage, violating every norm of morality, dishonor God by their crimes and doubly dishonor him by claiming to commit them in His name. They say that you are not true Muslims; I say that they are not true Muslims.



You, the Ahmadiyya, find yourselves in the midst of the struggle. Let me highlight for the record what you know so well. In Pakistan, under pressure by totalitarian extremists and their supporters, its government and constitution still label Ahmadis as “non- Muslims.” Pakistani law bars Ahmadis from calling their worship centers “mosques,” from publicly uttering the traditional Islamic greeting or quoting from the Qur’an, and from displaying the basic affirmation of Islam.

It prohibits the Ahmadiyya from sharing or publishing their beliefs, restricts them from building houses of worship and holding public meetings, and prevents them from voting unless they register as non-Muslims. Worst of all, the same extremist forces which cheer on the government when it deprives Ahmadis of their religious freedom also unleash horrific violence and death, as we saw in the July 27 attack and countless other atrocities. For these and other reasons, our commission continues to call for the United States to designate Pakistan a country of particular concern, marking it as among the worst religious freedom violators in the world. Unfortunately, these anti-Ahmadiyya forces are not limited to Pakistan. In Indonesia, violent extremist forces since 2008 have vandalized at least 50 Ahmadiyya mosques, and continue to pressure officials to close places of worship or ban Ahmadiyya activity altogether. In Saudi Arabia, Ahmadiyya members have been deported for their beliefs. In Egypt, they have been charged under its blasphemy laws. In 2010, USCIRF’s intervention helped a number of members leave Egypt for safety abroad. From these examples, one thing is clear. Those behind the persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslims are some of the worst enemies of human freedom and dignity.



But what a refreshing difference there is between you and your persecutors. Unlike them, you believe that people have inherent dignity, worth, and God-given rights which no movement or government can ever take away. You believe that human beings were created for fellowship and peace. You believe in the right of every member of the human family to worship freely according to conscience.

And after 9/11, it was you, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, who put your beliefs into action. You literally gave your blood to our nation, donating more than 25,000 bags of blood in memory of those who perished that day. Unlike your persecutors' message of tyranny and hate, yours is a voice for reason and freedom. You advocate not only for yourselves but for the rights and dignity of others.

At stake is nothing less than the future of humanity. At stake is what kind of world we will one day hand over to our children and to our children's children. Will it be a world of light, love, and liberty, or will it be a world of darkness, despair, and despotism? Will it be a world where dignity shines, or where dehumanization dominates?

And so my Ahmadi friends, my brothers and sisters, let us continue to stand together, to work together, to persevere together. Let us offer ourselves as God's servants for freedom and dignity, life and liberty, humanity and decency.

Thank you, my dear friends. God bless you.



### **The Key to Defeating ISIS** **Qasim Rashid, Huffington Post,** **September 15, 2014**

While President Obama reveals his plan to obliterate ISIS with force, and Bill Maher continues his ignorant rant to tie ISIS to Islam, New York Times journalist David Brooks provides the correct counter to ISIS in his September 4 column, "But, ultimately, [ISIS is] a spiritual movement that will have to be surmounted by a superior version of Islam."

Brooks is right. ISIS is bad ideology and the best cure for bad ideas are better ideas. The obvious question, therefore, is does a superior version of Islam exist today and if so, where is it?

In 1963, Islamic scholar and member of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Mirza Tahir Ahmad, wrote a landmark book titled *Murder in the Name of Allah*. This book dismantled the terrorist Mullah Maududi's dystopian claim that Islam should conquer the world through violent jihad. Some twenty years prior in 1941, Maududi established his right-wing political party known as Jamaat e Islaami with the goal of establishing an Islamic State to conquer the world.

Unfortunately, by 1963 most Muslim leaders rejected Tahir Ahmad's work and arrogantly argued that Maududi was right about Islam forcibly conquering the world. Thus, Maududi soon inspired Sayed Qutb and the Muslim Brotherhood, then the Taliban, and then Al Qaeda. And now we see the most bitter fruit of Maududi's labor -- ISIS.

As journalist Kevin McDonald of The Guardian notes in his September 9 column:

When he made his speech in July at Mosul's Great Mosque declaring the creation of an Islamic state with himself as its caliph, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi quoted at length from the Indian/Pakistani thinker Abul A'la Maududi, the founder of the Jamaat-e-Islami party in 1941 and originator of the contemporary term Islamic state.

It is worth noting that Maududi had zero training on Islamic theology. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad nor the Qur'an validate al-Baghdadi's or Maududi's warped and self-concocted ideology.

Thus we return to David Brooks' astute observation that ISIS can only be defeated by a "superior version of Islam." In *Murder in the Name of Allah*, Tahir Ahmad argued for everything a superior Islam would offer -- i.e. everything ISIS is not. Tahir Ahmad demonstrated why apostasy and blasphemy laws are alien to Islam, why Islam condemns all forms of terrorism and religious compulsion, why mosque and state must remain separate, and why Islam condemns theocracy.

Tahir Ahmad advocated for the same moderate, pluralistic, service to humanity focused and superior Islam that Prophet Muhammad taught. Muslim leaders worldwide instead ignorantly sided with Maududi. Accordingly, 40 years ago this month on September 7, 1974, Muslim leaders from each of the then 72 sects of Islam in existence unanimously agreed that the millions of members of the 73rd sect -- the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community -- are infidels, non-Muslim, and outside the fold of Islam.

In essence Muslim leaders did the world a favor by making clear where their alliances stood -- with Maududi, the father of ISIS. The sect of Islam they excommunicated was the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and this is precisely the superior form of Islam that Brooks -- and the world at large -- awaits. Lip service aside, here is why the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community demonstrably practices that superior form of Islam that humanity needs.

First, since its establishment in 1889, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has spread to 206 countries without a single act of religious violence. Instead, they incessantly serve humanity through Humanity First and Muslims For Life. Likewise, Ahmadi Muslims are tested. Despite facing brutal and ongoing persecution by groups like Maududi's Jamaat e Islaami, the Taliban, and ISIS sympathizers, Ahmadi Muslims have never retaliated, approved, or advocated the slightest violence in response. Additionally, Ahmadi Muslims champion universal religious freedom, separation of mosque and state, and reject blasphemy laws. Finally, Ahmadi Muslims number in the tens of millions and are in fact the fastest growing sect of Islam. Indeed, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is the world's single largest Muslim organization united under one Imam. And that brings me to the crux of why this community of Muslims passionately writes the narrative on the future of Islam.

The tens of millions of Ahmadi Muslims in 206 countries worldwide are all united under one Imam -- His Holiness the Khalifa of Islam, Mirza Masroor Ahmad. Unlike the terrorist ISIS "caliph" al-Bhagdadi, the Islam Ahmadiyya Caliphate has existed worldwide for 106 years and counting, and peacefully at that. This is the natural result of an Islamic community founded on the principles of compassion for all humanity and condemnation of all terrorism.

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Messiah Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote in 1902:

Be kind and merciful to humanity, for all are His creatures; do not oppress them with your tongue, or hands, or in any other way. ... O Muslim scholars and mullahs! Listen to me. I tell you truly that this is not the time for jihad. Do not disobey God's Holy Prophet. The awaited Messiah has arrived and orders you to abstain from religious wars involving armed combat, killing and bloodshed.

The only "superior form of Islam" the world needs today is the Islam taught by Prophet Muhammad himself. It is that Islam that the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community stands unique in exemplifying for over a century.

And that Islam is the key to defeating ISIS.

### **Ahmad: The true caliphate Sheila Ahmad, Stafford County Sun, September 17, 2014**

At the end of last month, I renewed my pledge of allegiance to the Khalifa of Islam (Caliph). There are millions around the globe who have taken this pledge and revive it every year along with hundreds of thousands who are making the pledge for the first time in their life.

But what does this pledge require? It requires you to promise to keep away from falsehood, cruelty, dishonesty, mischief and rebellion. It requires that you will not be carried away by passions, however strong they might be. It requires that under the impulse of any passions, you will cause no harm whatsoever to the creatures of God, neither by tongue nor by hands nor by any other means. It requires to entirely give-up pride and vanity and promise to pass all life in humbleness, cheerfulness and forbearance. It requires to be occupied in the service of God's creatures for His sake only and to endeavor to benefit mankind to the best of God-given abilities. The list goes on.

Khalifa of Islam is His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad the fifth successor of the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah. How this caliphate is different or rightful? I think anyone reading even a few of his quotes will see the difference and divine light.



Now we come to the next logical question: What is ISIS about and what is the Islamic concept of Caliphate?

The Quran says: "God has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them" [24:56]. This is a very unfortunate reality that ISIS is practicing murder, cruelty and injustice, whereas the verse quoted above mentions "good deeds" as a precondition to caliphate. Nobody can equate injustice with "good deeds."

Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) was mercy for all mankind. When ISIS associates cruelty to the teachings of the Messenger of Peace (pbuh), it really appears shocking and absurd to a practicing Muslim. It is the collective responsibility of Muslims in general and their leadership and governments in particular to come forward and denounce ISIS and their false caliphate.

Technically speaking, a caliphate in Islam is established in succession to Prophethood. So after the demise of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) there were four rightly guided caliphs. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself foretold the advent of a Promised reformer (Mahdi) and Messiah in the latter days.

In 1889, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community claimed from Qadian India that God had appointed him as the same promised reformer and prophet whose advent was foretold. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had also given the glad tidings to Muslims that in the latter days Khilafat will return on the precepts of Prophethood. Ahmadi Muslims claim their Khilafat is on the precepts of Prophethood, a basic argument which ISIS does not meet.

The Khalifa of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community talks of true Islam. His Holiness said: "Murder and bloodshed can only take you away from God."

It is not just about ISIS, rather it is equally important to uproot the underlying ideology of hatred from the hearts of young Muslims. We see some of them becoming prey when ISIS attempted to give some legitimacy to their existence by misquoting the term caliphate to their so called cause.

The Khalifa of Islam said: "The clerics are pushing young people, who know no better, towards evil and cruelty by falsely claiming it will lead them towards God."

He further said: "Could God ever permit for such evil people to establish Khilafat and to be His representatives on earth? Could that God who is the Merciful God ever assist tyrants and the cruel? Never!

He added: "...such claims are made only for the sake of gaining worldly power or to take over governments falsely in the name of religion."

Khalifa of Islam is the spiritual leader of the Ahmadi Muslims and is concerned for the spiritual health of his followers. He prays for them and they also have a personal relation with him, and share even their personal problems with request for prayers. This caliph is worried for their physical health, their education and most importantly their spirituality.

This is what true caliphate is about. The caliphate claimed by ISIS has no survival value in it, but its cruelty must stop as well.







# FROM THE ARCHIVE

Muslim Sunrise – Fourth Quarter 1944 Issue

## *Religion in America*

Churches go on talking as though most folks paid serious attention to them. They must think that this is true. It is not true. Less than half the people in the United States have even a nominal membership in any church. Of those who do belong, only about one-third go to church on any given Sunday—one in six of the whole population.

I should like to see the churches face the fact that, to the average citizen and his wife and his up-growing sons and daughters, organized Christianity no longer seems to matter much as a vital force in American life.

If the churches are really under the impression that they have much hold on the rank and file of Americans, let them consult the chaplains in the Army, Navy and Marines. There are a few chaplains—it is true—who tell tall tales of religious enthusiasm among the men, though even they rarely claim that there is visible or audible much of any love for the churches as such. But most chaplains are disillusioned. They are like those in one large group of educated and highly placed padres, in the forces, who wrote recently to their friends a round-robin letter which said, in part, "We are shocked by the almost complete lack of interest in Christ or Christianity which we observe in the men and women to whom we minister...They are not anti-religious. They simply do not care or know what Christianity or any other religion is or teaches."

As for what the churches think and say, what influence does that have on the handling of American politics, the conduct of American education, the regulation of marriage and divorce, or on sex and drink, on how industrial disputes are settled, or how we carry on business?

As a plain matter of fact, religion in this country is generally regarded as a tolerated pastime for such people as happen to like to indulge in occasional godly exercises. I should like to see the churches recognize that they have been pushed into the realm of the non-essentials, and to persuade them to fight like fury for the right and the duty to bring every act of America and Americans before the bar of God's judgment.

The leaders of both Catholicism and Protestantism—it is true—are making valiant claim to such a right and duty. But the great mass of church members are content to regard the churches as private culture clubs, nice for christenings, weddings and funerals. Most church members readily agree with the unchurched majority that it is not the proper business of the churches to criticize America or Americans, even though anyone with eyes can see that the country and its people are living increasingly a self-seeking and lawless life. Our free institutions are in danger and, as citizens, we grow less and less competent to put the general welfare ahead of individual and class cupidity.

I should like either to see the rank and file of alleged church-men wake up and fight for God in this pagan country, or else to see leaders disregard their timid followers and go out of the church buildings, shake off the dust of denominationalism from impatient feet, and appeal to the people generally. Americans will listen to religion if and when it claims to have relationship to real life.

In the second place, I should like to see the churches do more teaching and indulge themselves in less oratory and self-centered activity. Here in America we have too long believed that this world is all the world there is, and that the only goods worth working for are things, money, amusements, excitements, applause and worldly power. We have come to put our trust for future welfare chiefly in a multitude of gadgets, physical and political. Thousands are being awakened by the war. There are already plenty of people, and there will be more, who want to learn about a way of life which is not that of mere producers, consumers and cannon-fodder.

They want to be taught—and they want their children taught—a religious way of life. But the churches do not teach them, not in terms that seem real. Catechisms and Sunday Schools of the various communions are dwindling with a rapidity that scares the church authorities. No wonder they melt away, for the teaching in them, with rare exceptions, is unbelievably vague, scrappy, futile. Children are asked, to memorize teachings in outworn language forms, not tied up with daily activities; or else they are given snippets from the Bible, mostly having no religious significance. They get a picture of Jesus as a long haired utterer of platitudes, instead of as a basic revolutionist with a timeless message for the strong and comfort for the weak.

The churches do not teach the children. As for adult religious education, there is not one American parish in a thousand that has any of it, except for what is injected in a sermon once in a while. We are a nation of religious illiterates. I should like to see every local congregation reorganize itself in such a way that teaching is the thing around which all else revolves.

Lastly I wish the postwar Churches would relearn what they have too much forgotten; namely, how to worship God in spirit and in truth. One often gets the impression that neither pastor nor people really believe in God; if they did, there would be more humility, a greater awe, a more simple adoration. The average church service is not religious enough—is scarcely religious at all.

The existing churches may continue to deteriorate until they have become a laughing stock of angels and of men, but the Church of God cannot be stopped.

## Why?

Because men need God and because God's love for them is inexhaustible.  
*Bernard Iddings Bell—Everybody's Digest.*



# PERSPECTIVE

## Race for Superiority (Falahud Din Shams)

Throughout history, people have categorized themselves into many groups and classes. A classification is based on the geographical area the person comes from. We say that the person is American, Mexican, Indian, Egyptian, Arabian or Chinese. Then we classify people based on their race such as a person could be Arian white, African black or yellow Chinese. We also classify people based on their religious beliefs, such as a person is a Hindu, Jew, Christian, Muslim or an Atheist. We further sub-classify this category and describe them as Catholics, Presbyterian, Mormon, Sunni and Shia etc. We also have categories based on the political views such as Republican, Democrat, Socialist or Communist. We label people as Liberals or Conservative. There are many other categories to identify groups of people but these are sufficient for now. It should be noted that a human being could be part of many classifications at the same time.

We have also discovered that there are many problems associated with these classifications. Mostly, they are based on the complex of proving ourselves to be superior to others. Jews claimed that they were the chosen people of God and thus superior to all other races. Hitler tried to establish that it was definitely not the Jews but the White Arian race that was superior to all other races and therefore should reign over the whole world. Jews just claimed a small piece of land in Palestine to be their God given empire. In the process, millions of lives were lost. People who had nothing do with the whole debate also suffered as the Polish, Russians and Americans. At the same time, the White "superior" race felt it was acceptable to enslave the "inferior" race of Blacks. They even justified their actions with references from the Bible.

I don't know why people did not make classifications based on the actions of individuals. They could have classified people as thieves, murderers, adulterers, liars, etc. We attribute some of these evil actions to a whole group of nationalities and religious groups. As the politically incorrect Archie Bunker once said, "You find an honest Italian and you have got something." Bigots abound everywhere to tell us that all Blacks are lazy and Mexicans are hard working. All Muslims are terrorists and the Irish are drunks.

To me, a thief is a thief is a thief. It does not matter whether he is a Hindu, Muslim or a Jew. He is just a thief. A terrorist is just plain terrorist. Who cares if he claims to be a Christian, Muslim or a Jew? Christian terrorists in Ireland are no different than the terrorists in Serbia, Sri Lanka or Palestine. As soon as we classify them as a religious or political group, a whole mass of people in that class come to their rescue and try to defend them as a matter of honor for their class.

There are many other problems as a result of these classifications. We just have to label a person as a liberal in a majority conservative area and regardless of how righteous that person may be, he is doomed. The opposite is also true. A Republican in a Democrat majority area is facing the same situation. As a friend of mine said about a person who helped him, "He is a great person, but too bad he is a Republican."

When the world was small and the travel from one area to other was a gruesome and difficult task, these classifications did not matter much. If an area which was populated with purely white people and they thought they were superior for whatever reason, it was of no consequence to anyone. If Hindus thought that their culture is the oldest and wisest, it did not matter since they were the only ones in India.





With the advent of planes, trains and automobiles, things have changed.

With the world being brought so close together, all these classifications matter. We all have neighbors who are from different nationalities, races, religions and cultures. If you are a white American and there are Jews, Blacks and Asians living in your neighborhood, your claim to being from a superior race is bound to bring trouble. The issue remains to be solved. What do we do about the inherent quest of human beings to be accepted as better than anyone else?

The Holy Qur'an has offered a solution. It says that the most superior among you is the one who excels in righteousness. Under this concept, it is irrelevant if a person is African, American, Chinese or Australian, Republican, Democrat, Liberal or Conservative. He would be superior if he is truthful, honest, a patron of orphans and widows, helpful to travelers and decent with his wife, children and neighbors. We could classify people by these categories of character. The race for superiority on this platform could bring about a change in people for the better. Instead of wishing that one was born as white, black or yellow, we could be classified based on our endeavor and hard work of being righteous.

The Holy Qur'an has also suggested that we should "vie with each other in goodness". Let us compete to see who is more honest, truthful, philanthropic and compassionate to others. It could never end up in killing other innocent human beings in the name of collateral damage. The race for goodness has always taken place in the times of prophets. It brought out communities of people who were truly righteous and brought about remarkable changes in the character of their nations.

I don't know how long it will take us to understand and adopt the system of classifying ourselves based on the principles offered by the Holy Qur'an. We all know the classification system we have been using has become obsolete and is doomed to create more problems and destruction in the future. If the Palestinians and the Jews acted as righteous people, the issue of being a Muslim or a Jew would go away real quick. If the people in Northern and Southern Ireland started acting as righteous, the matter of being Catholics or Protestants will be irrelevant.

I think it is bound to happen. The world will learn it through logical analysis and debate or after destruction of a third world war, killing a few more millions. God has made it easy for us to have knowledge through revelation for our benefit but somehow we don't learn from history. After the Second World War, did Hitler win his claim of superiority of the White race or did the Jews accomplish their mission of living in peace in the Promised Land? We need to heed to the word of God and stop judging religions for all of our problems. Prophet Jesus(as) and Prophet Muhammad(sa) did not teach people to kill each other and be terrorists, murderers, thieves or adulterers. They taught people to be righteous, humble, and helpful, and to take care of their neighbors, the needy, orphans, widows and their own families. Judge them based on how they and their disciples behaved and brought forth a much better society than they inherited from their forefathers.

Exemplary character is what makes a person superior – not their pedigree, culture nor country. We all need to overcome the superiority complex formed in the isolation age. It is this complex that leads us straight to arrogance. Let us compete in the race to become righteous. It would really discourage the liars, thieves, murderers and terrorists in the society.

It is all up to us.



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